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DIARY OF TRAVELS

IN

THREE QUARTERS OF THE GLOBE.

BY

AN AUSTRALIAN SETTLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1856.

203. C. 11.

LONDON:

F. Shoberl, Printer, 51, Rupert Street, Haymarket.

P R E F A C E.

BEFORE leaving my distant home at the Antipodes, many kind friends expressed a wish that I should commit to writing, for their amusement, my impressions of the various scenes and wonders I was about to visit in the course of a pilgrimage which was to lead me over many of the most interesting portions of the Old World. The following "Diary" has been the result, and, as too frequently happens in like cases, my views having become more ambitious as my task proceeded, I have yielded to the prevalent inclination to print, and now add my Book of Travels

to the legion of works of a like character which encumber the shelves of every Bookseller from Bond Street to Paternoster Row. Whether in this I have acted with wisdom or otherwise, the event will determine; but should the "Diary" find readers among the public, I trust that the above remarks may be deemed a sufficient excuse, where feelings, or incidents, have been recorded, or dwelt upon, which can possess little interest for any but the personal friends of

THE AUTHOR.

January, 1856.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

- Page 14, line 13, for *face* read *race*
" 66, " 19, for *surprizing* read *surprising*
" 104, " 24, for *is* read *are*
" 112, " 24, for *those* read *these*
" 141, " 23, for *grain* read *gram*
" 154, " 3, for *make* read *makes*
" 154, " 13, for *keep* read *kept*
" 241, " 1, for *more threading some* read *threading
some more*
" 284, " 14, for *yolk* read *yoke*
" 315, " 8, for *Bengal* read *Beyrout*

VOL. II.

- Page 157, line 2, for *clearness* read *cleanness*
" 168, " 5, for *exported* read *imported*
" 297, " 6, for *the Viterbo* read *Viterbo*
" 358, " 8, and page 372, line 23, for *Sallanche* read
Sallenche
" 376, " 15, for *Soane* read *Suone*



DIARY OF TRAVELS,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from Yulgilbar—Beautiful Landscape—Travelling-party—Troublesome Horses—Stations of Gordon Brook and Ramornie—Country without Roads—Camping for the Night—Cloud's Creek—Lofty Mountain Range—A Picturesque Scene.

ON Saturday, July 8th, 1854, bidding a long adieu to Yulgilbar, my bush home in the picturesque valley of the broad Clarence River, I set out on my route to Sydney to take a passage to Europe. The day was warm and sunny—a bright, clear Australian winter day—and when, gaining the brow of an adjacent ridge, I turned my horse to take a last and farewell look, I thought I might travel far before my eyes

would again rest upon a scene of equal beauty and interest.

Beneath me, at the foot of the slope on which I stood, surrounded by garden and vineyard, its modest roof of thatch shaded by the drooping willow and thick foliage of the beautiful white cedar, lay the cottage in which I had passed the last fourteen years—the best years of my manhood, and probably the happiest of my life.

Around and beyond spread a broad expanse of green pasture and woodland, mountain and dell, the dark jungle-clad steep of the New England boundary ranges terminating the view in the distance—their deep purple hues in rich contrast with the bright green of the nearer landscape, and the clear, blue, transparent sky of this delightful season of the Australian year.

Among the buildings of the farm-yard, still lingering upon the spot where I had parted from them, stood the servants who had assembled to bid me farewell; whilst, upon the intervening slope, in scattered

groups, were numbers of the dark children of the forest, who had drawn together for the same purpose, and now reclined beneath the shade of the great trees, some looking on in grave silence, whilst others gave vent to their regrets in wailings and lamentations.

I turned away with a sad heart, for although this voyage to Europe had for years been the dearest object of my wishes, and constant theme of my day-dreams; yet, now that the long-wished-for moment had arrived, I felt reluctant to leave a spot associated with so many remembrances of successful enterprise and requited toil, endeared too by crowding recollections of joy and sadness, happiness and sorrow, and dear, above all, as the resting-place of one who, in years gone by, had shared with me the labour and the strife, the care and the hopes, but was early and suddenly cut down never to know the reward.

Beneath o'ershadowing cedars, planted by my own hand, but now stately spread-

ing trees, a broad slab marks the peaceful lonely grave of a brother. Shall I ever more revisit that hallowed shade? Shall I ever again return to view these long familiar and well-loved scenes? Making an effort to subdue such depressing reflections, I now pressed on to overtake the rest of my travelling party who had got off a short time in advance, conducting a number of horses which I am taking to Sydney to be turned into cash. They have borne me well through my journeys upon the land, and must now, in a new shape, assist to carry me over the water.

My party for the road consists only of one European and a native black boy; but, besides these, I have this afternoon many supernumeraries who come not only to see me off but also to assist with the led horses which, being eleven in number, and very fresh, are somewhat troublesome and difficult to manage.

At about eight miles from home, all appearing to go smoothly, my two young

assistants and comrades, E——t and McL——n, took leave and went back. But soon afterwards we met with several mishaps and disasters: the horses being too many in each hand, got foul of the trees, struggled and pulled different ways to the great peril of their necks, and in this way breaking the strong halters of bullocks' hide with which they were coupled together, some got free, galloped off, and were with difficulty overtaken and recovered.

However, after all, though somewhat late in the evening, with cavalry and baggage all intact, we reached the ever hospitable station of Gordon Brook, eighteen miles from home, and were soon installed by the cheerful fireside, and the horses secured in the paddocks. To add to my pleasure and satisfaction, I unexpectedly met here an intimate friend and near connexion, with whom was thus afforded me the welcome opportunity of a long farewell conversation during a stroll after dinner in the bright

moonlight, the evening for this wintry season being unusually mild and temperate.

Sunday, 9th. Much time was lost this morning with some of the younger horses, which, although we had the advantages of a stock-yard, and ample assistance in the way of men, were very troublesome and difficult to catch. A bad augury this for the future, as, after another night, we shall be in the open bush and dependant upon our own unassisted exertions. The morning was far advanced ere we got fairly off; but, as the journey proposed for the day was not more than fourteen or fifteen miles, the delay was of little consequence.

In our route lay the station of Newbold Grange, and here some business, which it was necessary to arrange and dispose of previously to my departure, occasioned such further delay that the broad moon had risen high ere we reached our destination for the night, and loosed our hungry beasts to revel in the abundant pasture and spacious paddocks of Ramornie, the hospitable dwell-

ing of a valued friend, and where awaited me one of the pleasantest of this life's pleasant things—a hearty welcome. I have now reached the spot at which I finally bid adieu to the Clarence, with all its familiar scenes and friendly faces. From this point I strike to-morrow across the country to the mountain-road leading into the table lands of New England, and for the next fortnight my only dwelling will be my tent, and my only companions my Anglo-Australian servant, Smith, and Denny, my merry, good-tempered, aboriginal black boy.

Monday, 10th. It was somewhat late before I got my party away. Some of the horses were not found till the paddocks were gone over a second time. We however turned the interval to account by getting a couple of shoes on to our pack-horse, a young filly which, before leaving home, defied all the attempts of the smith to shoe her, but who is now so far tamed as to submit pretty quietly to have her fore-feet handled. The horses were at length

all collected, and we departed about eleven o'clock; my friend T——I kindly sending his black boy to assist for the day.

Soon after starting, I took leave of T. S——h, who assumes charge and command at Yulgilbar till my return, and who had accompanied me thus far to see me fairly off, and to receive all those last words and instructions which are sure to come to mind after one has left home. When he had turned back I felt a good deal depressed. The last link which connected me with home seemed now severed, and I felt the reality of the separation.

We now pressed forwards, and as we had sixteen or twenty miles to go across country without any road, and had made so late a start, we could not stop to bait our horses at noon. Several of the quietest we let loose during the march to-day, and found to our inexpressible satisfaction that they followed and kept up well, giving little trouble.

Shortly before sunset, we reached the

spot where I proposed to encamp. Water was abundant, but the grass bad; however, it was impossible to proceed further in search of better, evening was closing and we had many horses to catch in the open forest, without enclosure or fence of any kind to assist us. I anticipated difficulty in this, and was not disappointed. We, however, were favoured by a bright full moon, and evening had not long merged into night when, the horses all hobbled and disposed of, our fires were blazing, and my tent pitched. Tired and hungry, we now quickly prepared and despatched our supper of hot tea and damper,* with beef-steaks broiled upon the embers, and then turned into the blankets to prepare for an early move to-morrow morning.

Tuesday, 11th. We were all astir before dawn, and had breakfasted, struck the tent, and got everything packed up by the time the sun was fairly above the hills.

* The ordinary bread of the Australian bush, unleavened dough, baked in the ashes of the wood fire.

The catching, unhobbling, and haltering so many horses, seventeen in all, however, was a rather serious operation, but none had strayed far, nor were very troublesome to secure; so, after all, we got away in very good time. The night was remarkably mild for this cold season of the year, and our steeds consequently look fresh and pretty well filled, notwithstanding the scantiness of the grass.

At starting I sent back Jimbolo, the black boy, from Ramornie, and a stockman who I brought from home thus far, and we are now reduced to our own party, Smith, Denny, and myself, and must henceforth trust to our own resources, and not look for help of any kind, either roofs to cover our heads, or yards or inclosures to secure our cattle. However, emboldened by the success of last night, we turned loose more of the led horses, and set forward in the following order: a packhorse, carrying my tent, bedding, clothes, and all my own camp equipage, is led by myself. Denny leads

another, carrying provisions for the whole party—flour, beef, tea and sugar, with some opossum cloaks, and an array of tin pots. Smith leads the two colts which we still retain in hand, and we all join in driving before us the nine remaining horses. These were no sooner started this morning than taking the beaten road, which we now had under foot, they trotted briskly forward giving us no trouble, and before mid-day we had accomplished fifteen miles to Nymboye, on the South River, upon the grassy bank of which we unsaddled and turned loose our steeds to rest and feed, whilst we, on our parts, soon lighted a blazing fire, and prepared our meal of the never-failing tea, broiled slices of beef, and *leather jackets*, thin cakes of flour and water, mixed and kneaded upon a fresh piece of gumtree bark stripped for the occasion, and quickly baked, or rather broiled upon the glowing wood embers. Nothing is nicer than this kind of bread, which is in appearance something between a Scotch oat cake and a ship biscuit.

Our repast ended, we had to procure a supply of beef at a station adjacent, and to borrow tools to replace a shoe which one of the horses cast yesterday, and which I observed falling and thus saved very fortunately, for to procure shoes upon the journey would be almost impossible. When I offered payment for the fine piece of beef with which we were supplied, and which Denny carried off in great triumph, it was declined upon the ground that the giver had, on some former occasion, been furnished with provisions at the Yulgilbar stores, when travelling in that direction.

These operations and the shoeing the horse, which Smith very skilfully performed, consumed so much time, that when we again resumed our march, we had not gone more than four or five miles, ere the declining sun warned us that it was time to think of camping for the night, and immediately after coming to a most appropriate spot, a dry, gravelly ridge beside a rill of water, with abundance of dead wood

for our fires, and hard by a warm, sheltered little glade, and hillside covered with fine pasture for our beasts, we pulled up and unsaddled.

Now came an anxious trial of success in catching the horses which were loosed to-day. The result was quite satisfactory, all submitting with little resistance except one, which gave us much trouble, and would not have been caught at all, could he have succeeded in his repeated endeavours to incite some of his companions to make off with him.

Wednesday, 12th. This morning found all the horses close at hand, and the night having been again remarkably temperate, and the feed excellent, they are well filled, and look famously. Our course now lay across a rough mountain track, where, as no water was to be found throughout the middle hours of the day, we pushed forward and completed the whole stage, twenty miles, before halting. We arrived early in the afternoon at Cloud's Creek, the little moun-

tain stream where we purposed camping, and selected as warm and sheltered a spot as could be found, the brassy glare of the declining sun, and clear, transparent air, warning us to prepare for a frosty night.

Our route, during a part of to-day, led us along the crest of a lofty range, from the highest part of which, the distant mountains about Yulgilbar were for the last time discernible. Poor Denny, true to the feeling of strong unquenchable love for home, or home sickness, so remarkable in his face, was visibly affected, and began to lament having undertaken so long a journey which was to carry him so far away; and I must myself confess that I did not, without emotion, behold this last far-distant glimpse. The appearance of our camp to-night was remarkably picturesque and pleasing in this wild mountain glen, to the otherwise somewhat lone and sombre aspect of which the pretty blue tent pitched amid a group of sheltering trees, the bright crackling fires, and the horses scattered

about and lazily browsing at ease among the abundant grasses of the little swamp or savannah in front, imparted an air of life and cheerfulness, and formed altogether a most agreeable picture.

CHAPTER II.

Truant Horses—Mountainous Ascent into New England—Blick's River—Requisites for a Camp—Successful Pursuit—The Downs of Hernani—Guy Fawkes River and Beautiful Falls—Great Granite Range of the Snowy Mountains—Wintry Region—Hall's Station—Requisites procured there—Camp Duties and Division of Labour—Intense Cold—Village of Macdonald River—Cheering Prospects—A New Climate.

THURSDAY, 13th. A bitter frost last night unsettled the horses, and set them rambling. When we rose to prepare breakfast and pack up, the bell, which is always attached to the neck of the one most disposed to stray, was nowhere to be heard; and, when morning dawned, not a horse was to be seen. Breakfast over, by the time it was broad daylight, taking halters and bridles on our arms, we started in search; and, soon striking the track, followed it over a stony ridge. The bell was then audible at a distance; and, guided by its sound, we

found all our nags huddled together in a warm nook, sheltered among thick trees and bushes.

Securing our working horses, we loosed the rest, which were no sooner free than they began to start off at a trot, and disperse among the bushes. To provide against such a contingency, we had, however, brought a saddle with us, borne upon Denny's curly head, and I was quickly mounted and in pursuit. A smart gallop of a few minutes brought all the fugitives together to the camp, where our pack-horse was quickly loaded; and, ere the white hoar frost had begun to yield to the levelled rays of the morning sun, we were all in the saddle, and again on our way.

The route to-day was rough and mountainous, comprising the principal ascent into New England. However, with the advantage of an early start, by mid-day we were over the worst part of the journey, and had reached Blick's River, a dashing torrent at the foot of the last long ascent,

and full thirteen miles from our last night's camp. We now unsaddled, and let loose our hungry beasts upon a sheltered hillside, where the grass was pretty good. In two hours we again packed up, and proceeded, the road still ascending along a scrubby, thickly-timbered ridge.

After journeying eight miles, we came to an open, grassy spot, a little oasis in this dark forest wilderness. Here we found all the requisites for a camp, abundant grass, remarkably good, and green for this advanced season, plenty of dry wood for our fires, dry ground for our beds, and water; but none unfortunately that our horses could get at, our own supply being drawn from a small spring far down the steep hillside. The green pasture and warm sheltered situation, however, were advantages not to be slighted, and we determined to encamp for the night. In this wild mountain glade, shaded by gigantic trees, and surrounded by dark cedar brushes, into the mysterious depths of which the sunlight

never enters, it required some persuasion to induce Denny, whose province it was to fetch water for the camp, to descend after dark to the spring. When he did attempt it, his torch of stringy bark became extinguished before he reached the water, and he came tearing back, yelling and shouting in great excitement. After this, he absolutely declined to renew the enterprise alone. In our elevated and well-sheltered position, we enjoyed quite a warm temperature, and our nags cropped the fine grass contentedly and at their ease, though the bright, sharp glitter of the stars overhead, told that it was a bitter cold frosty night in the open country beyond.

Friday, 14th. Last night continued warm, and the horses steady till towards daybreak, when impatience for the water set them moving. As soon as it was light, guided by the now distant sound of the bell, we found some of the most enterprising nags scrambling and tumbling in their hobbles far down the stony and rugged

mountain-side into a deep ravine, where the foremost had already reached a small stream.

Our only resource was now to unhobble the struggling animals, who looked chafed and fagged with their scramble, and turning them up the steep, to follow as fast as the long tangled grass, rocks, and fallen trees would allow; for amongst this lot there was not a horse that could be ridden bare-backed, and we had brought no saddle down the mountain. By dint of great exertion, however, we got them in sight of the camp; but, whilst there engaged saddling and packing up, the restless brutes were again off, and so quickly, that ere I could mount and hurry to the spot where we left them standing, they had succeeded in getting so far away, that it was only by intense listening I was able to catch a single faint distant note of the faithful bell.

Thus guided, I dashed away o'er brake and brier, and soon came upon a narrow track bearing the fresh sharp prints of

many horses' shoes. Along this I sped through the deep shades of the tall forest, an occasional sound of the yet distant horse-bell at intervals breaking the stilly silence of these mountain solitudes. A gallop of nearly two miles brought me at length in sight of the truants, which, having got their heads in the direction of home, were trotting briskly on. The clatter of pursuing hoofs told them they were discovered, and they faced round, looking guilty and disappointed.

I was now not long in rejoining the rest of the party; when I found, to my inexpressible annoyance, that the remaining horses which I had left near the camp, had been allowed to get out of sight, and were missing. Desiring Smith to proceed leisurely on the road with those I had brought up, I instantly started in quest of the others, cursing the ill luck that had brought us this mischance in the most thickly-wooded and broken district of our whole route. The search for these two

horses might occupy days, and *might*, after all, be unsuccessful, as in such a country they could be passed at a few yards distance unobserved, and they wore no bell to betray their whereabouts. I was, however, fortunate enough, after a short search, to come upon their traces beside a small streamlet at which they had drank, and following these, I soon after found the animals quietly feeding in one of the little open glades that occur at intervals in the thick forest which covers this mountain region.

Delighted with my good fortune, I soon overtook and again rejoined my party, now some miles on the road, and we went briskly on to make up for lost time. We now gained the summit level of the great plateau of New England; and, as we emerged from the deep shade upon the open downs of Hernani, the crunching of the frozen ground beneath our horses' hoofs told what we had escaped by remaining for the night under the cover and protection of the tall mountain-forests.

The sun shone brightly ; but, as the morning advanced, the setting in of the bitter cold west wind which sweeps in winter over the downs and plains of these elevated regions, determined me to push on for the friendly shelter of the Snowy Mountains, yet nearly twenty miles distant.

In the afternoon, cold and hungry, we made a short halt at the Guy Fawkes River ; and, whilst the refreshing "pot of tea" was in preparation, we were glad, though the sun was bright and unclouded, to gather round the blazing fire. The thundering of the Guy Fawkes Falls, where the little river precipitates itself over a perpendicular mass of basalt to a depth of some hundred feet a short distance below our camp, soon attracted the notice of Denny, who, with Smith, ran off to discover the cause. They returned full of wonder and delight, neither having before seen any falls approaching these in magnitude.

But, indeed, the Guy Fawkes is a very fine waterfall, and might well excite the

admiration of more experienced travellers. The body of water is at this season considerable ; and, after its first wild leap, the maddened stream, broken into a cloud of spray, is collected in its rocky basin only to be again dashed foaming over a second precipice scarcely inferior to the first. Beyond this, the still-tormented river, chafed by rocks and rapids, becomes lost to view in the depths of the wild, dark, unfathomable abyss, into which it has thus descended, and whose savage grandeur is in fine and remarkable contrast to the tranquil aspect of the level pastures above. As our present object, however, is to well feed and preserve the condition of our horses, rather than a search for the picturesque, we were not disposed to linger on this bleak plain, where the keen winds and biting frosts had converted the grass into a resemblance of deal shavings. Our usual frugal meal ended, we therefore hastily packed up, saddled, and proceeded on our way.

After passing the Guy Fawkes Station,

towards evening we entered the passes of the Snowy Mountains, a great granite range which here crosses the table-land. The name is somewhat a misnomer, as no snow lies upon these rocky heights except on very rare occasions. Among their defiles we found, as I had anticipated, shelter from the ruthless wind, and a much milder temperature.

Shortly before sunset we came to a halt in a little hollow, surrounded and well protected by lofty granite rocks and crags. Through this hollow passed a streamlet of the clearest water, and the old grass having been swept off by fire during the past autumn, the feed was better than any we had seen since leaving our last night's camp. This piece of good fortune put us all in high spirits: the operations of hobbling and unsaddling were speedily got through, our fires lighted, and suppers prepared. The horses, sheltered from the biting wind which had persecuted them all day, browsed contentedly; and, after night

had closed, and I lay reading in my warm tent, before which blazed a glorious fire, the echoes of the mountain were ever and anon awakened by Denny's loud, merry, ringing laugh, as he sat chatting with Smith at the camp-fire, which they jointly occupied a short distance from mine. They have no tent; but when the sky looks threatening, as it does to-night, Denny quickly with his tomahawk strips a *sheet* of bark from a neighbouring tree, and this dexterously set up before the fire upon an extemporary frame of sticks, in a sort of Dutch-oven form, makes a warm though somewhat limited shelter.

Saturday, 15th. We have now before us near one hundred miles of the open plains of New England, which we must traverse, exposed to the full rigour of the searching winds and bitter frosts of this wintry region. No friend, like the Snowy Mountain, will again offer his protection, till we shall reach the Moonby Pass, and, taking final leave of the table-land, descend

to the warm valleys of the west. Convinced that the withered pasture and cold nights of New England will do more to reduce the condition of our animals than an increased rate of travelling, I have determined to perform these hundred miles in three long days. We were, therefore, all astir this morning a full hour before daybreak, breakfasting and packing up by firelight, in order to start as soon as the dawn should enable us to see our horses. The sky looked very dark and threatening; and, whilst we were at breakfast, a trifling fall of snow greatly astonished Denny, who had never before beheld such a phenomenon.

Soon after starting, we quitted the defiles of the Snowy Mountains, and descended upon the opendowns, where, as yesterday, we soon discovered proofs that the temperature had been very different from that of our sheltered camp. Early in the forenoon we reached Hall's Station, one of the points where I had proposed replenishing our now

nearly-exhausted flour-bags. Here also we were fortunately able to obtain nails and tools to replace the shoes of one of our largest horses, which, having cast two, was already becoming lame. I meanwhile availed myself of our halt, and *access to a looking glass* to indulge in the luxury of a shave, my chin having been ignorant of soap and lather since we quitted Ramornie. While thus engaged, Smith came, in great tribulation, to acquaint me that the colt viciously resisted all attempts to shoe him. I therefore determined to take the matter in hand myself; when a few smart strokes of a rope's-end soon reduced our refractory fellow to submission, and the desired object was speedily effected. Here, as at the South River, when payment for the provisions supplied to us was offered, it was again refused.

Travelling steadily we had by sunset journeyed nearly thirty miles from our last night's bivouac, when we halted beside some small pools of water in the open forest,

On coming to camp, every one has his appointed duty. First, each unsaddles and hobbles his own horse; then, while I unload my packhorse, and Smith the other, Denny lights a fire. Smith and I then proceed to catch the loose horses, to remove the hobbles from their necks, where they have been carried through the day, and place them upon their fetlocks; finally, we take off their halters which they wear in the day to assist us in catching them at night.

While we are thus occupied, Denny cuts poles for my tent, and a piece of bark on which to make bread, and then I set the tent up, Smith cooks the supper, and Denny carries wood for the fires. So we are all pretty well employed till it is quite dark: then we sup: I take a walk round among the horses to see all right, and we go early to bed to prepare for the fatigues of the morrow. The bright, clear, transparent sky to-night gives warning of a bitter frost.

Sunday, 16th. Long before dawn, we began, as usual, our preparations for the

start: all goes like clockwork. I am generally first awake; and, before five o'clock (the day now breaks about six) I rouse the others, Denny requires a little shaking, and rubs his great eyes very hard before he can get them open: he then goes for water and fills the tin pots. I, meanwhile, strike and fold my tent and bedding, whilst Smith prepares the breakfast, and straps up his opossum cloak and baggage. The meal ended by the time it is light enough to see, we hang the bridles and halters across our arms, Denny takes my saddle upon his head, and we make for the sound of the bell.

This morning, when daybreak came, not a horse was in sight, but the distant bell-notes, sounding clear and distinct in the sharp frosty air, indicated where to seek them. Cold and miserable they looked, and so out of temper were they with their sufferings, that it was with much difficulty they could be kept together till all were unhobbled. As fast as any were loosed,

they made off, and the rest endeavoured to follow—tearing about in their hobbles, heating themselves, and chafing their legs. However, by mounting Denny, and keeping him on the gallop—this way and that—to turn in the stragglers, the unhobbling was at length got through: though, before it was achieved, our fingers had become so benumbed and frozen that it was with difficulty we could undo the buckles. Our packhorses were now speedily loaded, and we moved off, resolved to make a long stretch to-day to insure getting clear to-morrow of this cold wintry land.

On proceeding, we found the pools and water-holes all frozen over, and the horses, when they attempted to drink, only bobbed their astonished noses against the solid ice in some places nearly an inch thick. As the day advanced, a bitter west wind completely neutralized the effect of a bright sun; and, as we crossed the wide plains of Gostwick and Salisbury, we felt the icy blast in its full intensity. At mid-day, on

halting, we were glad to stow ourselves away under a sheltering bank; even late in the afternoon, we saw ice still unmelted in a shady spot. A brilliant sunset was reddening the cold clear sky when, having accomplished full thirty-five miles, we halted by a pool of rain water, in the open forest, half a mile off the road, at a spot where the long winter grass looked a little less withered than elsewhere. Much rain, which we have fortunately escaped, has lately fallen in this part of the country, and the ground about our camp to-night is miserably wet and boggy.

Monday, 17th. Last night was the most severe that we have yet experienced. This morning the boggy ground was hard as a rock, and the grass stark and frozen. We found our poor horses shivering and disconsolate: icicles hung from their noses, and the hoar frost whitened their backs. For ourselves, it was with difficulty we could maintain sufficient life and sensation in our fingers whilst we got through the necessary opera-

tions with straps and hobbles covered with rime and frost.

The sun was rising as we got into our saddles and moved off. The road, wet and sloppy from the effect of the late rains, was now covered with ice, which hissed and crackled under foot, and maintained a struggle with the warm unclouded sun, until he had begun his descent towards the west. Such a degree of cold is very unusual even in this cold region of Australia.

During the forenoon, we passed the little village of Macdonald River, where I sent Smith to procure a further supply of flour and beef. Soon after our mid-day halt, we reached the borders of the table-land; and, from the summit of the Moonby Pass, looked gladly down upon the broad warm valleys of the Cockburn and Peel. Our jaded animals, which during the last few days have visibly declined in condition, and begin to look ragged and worn, seemed to share the exhilarating effect of the wide prospect before us, or to snuff the green pastures

afar, as with pricked ears, and joyous snortings they briskly went forward.

A continuous descent of three miles, or thereabouts, brought us to the bottom of the pass, and into an entirely new region and climate. Great coats and comforters were now thrown off, and it was with difficulty we could urge our nags along, so ravenously did they assail the luxuriant green herbage which here took the place of the withered grasses we had so lately quitted upon the table-land above. A few miles from the foot of the Moonby, we chose our camping-ground in a fine meadow-like flat upon the bank of the pretty Cockburn River, and liberated our famished beasts to revel in rich pastures, such as they had not seen since leaving the green valleys of Yulgilbar.

CHAPTER III.

A Day's Rest—Station of Nimingar—Goonoogoonoo—Mountain Route—Rich Pasture—Plains of Warah—Deserted Farms—Aboriginal Tribes—Satisfactory Condition of the Horses—Plains of Pickering—Arrival at Merton—Journey Resumed—Embark at Maitland for Sydney—Landing the Horses—Arrival of the Madras—Preparations for Europe.

TUESDAY, 18th. This day we remained at rest; and, to give our horses the full advantage of their holiday, we took off their hobbles, and turned them loose quite free, without even the usual halter upon their heads. The poor brutes thoroughly enjoyed the repose, and stretched at length upon the ground, basked in the warm sunshine. A couple of our riding horses only were kept in hobbles as a means of recovering the others.

We employed ourselves during the forenoon, in building a small yard with long

saplings, which with our tomahawks we cut for the purpose, judging, and as the event proved not erroneously, that, when rested and refreshed, the horses would not, free and unfettered as we had now left them, be easily recaught. The remainder of the warm day was dozily spent in pleasant rest, which we indeed were as much disposed to enjoy as were our steeds.

In the evening, I rode to a sheep station a couple of miles off, to endeavour to purchase a sheep, or a part of one, but was unsuccessful, as the overseer in charge had no authority to sell. For many days past, we have had none but salted meat, and even of that our supply is now exhausted.

Wednesday, 19th. We broke up our camp and moved off this morning, but not very early, as I purpose making but short stages for the rest of the journey; and the excellent feed at this spot rendered me reluctant to leave it. We had not proceeded far when Denny's sharp eyes espied an opossum badly concealed in the hollow branch

of a small tree, and being without meat, we determined to have him. The opossum, however, though caught napping, was not to be so easily taken, for when Denny, having nimbly climbed to his retreat, was about to annihilate him with a blow of the tomahawk, the animal, not so sleepy as he appeared, sprang suddenly into the air, and descending with all legs spread, came flat upon the ground, seemingly with much force; but that he had accomplished the feat without injury to himself, he quickly convinced us, by skipping up another and much taller tree so rapidly as to escape all the murderous attempts of Smith and myself, who, armed with sticks, awaited his descent. Denny shrieked with wild laughter, as from his perch overhead he watched our defeat; but the poor opossum was not to be allowed thus to escape, and was finally sent to the ground along with the branch to which he clung, and ruthlessly despatched.

Resuming our way, we soon after came

to the station of Nimingar, and there procured a supply of fresh beef: the poor opossum might, therefore, have been allowed to eat his gum leaves, and doze away his life in peace a little longer. At Nimingar, we crossed the Peel, and struck across the fine open *box-forest* towards Goonoogoonoo. Getting now into a country well stocked with sheep, grass became scarce and bad; and, when the approach of evening obliged us to encamp, we found but very indifferent pasture.

Thursday, 20th. Last night was excessively cold, and for this locality very unusually so. This morning thin ice covered even the pools of the *running stream* by our camp, a phenomenon very rarely seen in this part of the country.

We started early, and soon after passed the Australian Agricultural Company's Head Station of Goonoogoonoo; and here again, quitting the high road, we struck off for a bridle route through the mountains by which we shall save some dis-

tance, and travel by a more sheltered and better grassed district. At mid-day, we had difficulty in the wide box-forest to find water; but, after some search, succeeded in discovering a small supply enough for our purpose in a rocky gully.

Towards evening, we were equally lucky; and, by following an old cattle-track, came to a small pool in a warm sheltered situation well up among the mountains, though quite in our route, and where the grass was excellent. The sun to-day was very hot. In New England, we could scarcely keep warm in great coats with woollen comforters and thick gloves; this afternoon we rode in our shirt sleeves.

Friday, 21st. A warm night and abundant feed made our beasts look famously this morning. We started very early, and a long descent bringing us again to the low lands, the hoar frost which covered the ground, and abundant ice upon the waters, showed how much we had gained by the discovery of that little pool which had en-

abled us to remain above in our snug mountain warm retreat of last night.

Early in the forenoon, we came upon the great northern road near Loder's, but shortly again left it, and took the track to Warah. At Borambil Creek, we met with capital feed for our mid-day halt; and, early in the evening, having accomplished about twenty miles, we descended upon the beautiful plains of Warah. The splendid rich pasture was as green as a meadow; and having found at the edge of the plain a small pool of water, but very shallow and muddy, we immediately encamped. Streams, or ponds, are few and far between in this region of level plains, and such feed as here abounded was not to be passed for the chance of better water. Our steeds were soon turned loose, and fell to work with an eagerness that showed they fully appreciated the quality of the herbage.

Saturday, 22nd. Last night was warm and genial, and our horses this morning looked surprisingly plump and sleek. Being

unwilling to hurry them away from such splendid pasture, I determined to make a late start and a short stage; and, whilst Smith baked a damper, I employed myself cutting some of the finely-scented Myall wood that grows on these plains, and of which I wished to carry a few specimens to England.

About eleven o'clock we got away. Before us over the plain, about ten miles distant, rose the bold chain of the Liverpool range, the Cedar-brush Pass by which we were to cross, showing clear and distinct like a wide portal in the huge dark wall. Near the foot of the pass we halted to refresh before making the ascent.

The afternoon was advancing when we again got in motion, and our horses reluctantly facing the hill, sidled off first one way and then another, and gave us so much trouble, that when we reached the summit the sun was sinking in the level west. Beyond the pass, the hills and broad valleys of the Hunter and its tributaries now

spread before us. In the opposite direction the eye roamed over the boundless west, the wide treeless expanse of the Liverpool plains skirting the horizon. But there was no time to gaze; the shades of evening were closing fast, and the night wind of these highland solitudes already sighed through the tall forest.

Pressing forward, we hurried down the steep and long descent; but, ere we reached the deep valley of the Dart at the mountain's foot, the daylight had completely forsaken us, and the operation of encamping we had to grope through in the dark as best we might. The horses once caught, hobbled, and disposed of, we kindled a large fire, and by its light managed to pitch the tent, and complete the camp arrangements. But our meat-bag was missing. Denny carried this upon his saddle, and was sure he had it safe shortly before we halted; despite, however, a lengthened search by torchlight, it was not to be found.

Our long journey is now drawing to a

close. The valley of the Hunter, upon the waters of which we are at length encamped, conducts us to the port of Morpeth, now only one hundred and thirty miles distant, and thence an easy steam-voyage of a few hours carries us to Sydney. On the banks of the Hunter, only fifty miles from our present resting-place, Merton, the home of my boyhood, and still the residence of my family, is in effect the goal and termination of our toilsome march, as there we intend to halt and repose for awhile, and afterwards a few days of easy travel will suffice for the remainder of the distance to Sydney.

Sunday, 23rd. At dawn this morning Denny renewed his search for the missing part of our commissariat, and soon found the bag, but a marauding gnacom* had during the night torn it open, and devoured the contents. We had, therefore, to breakfast as we had supped upon dry bread. We started early; and being now within the *boundaries*, where habitations are more nu-

* Gnacom, wild dog.

merous than beyond the great dividing range, Smith, before we made our noonday halt, had discovered some old acquaintance, and provided himself with a famous supply of roast beef, a hot loaf, and a bottle of home-made wine, which he produced with great triumph.

Some years have elapsed since I last travelled by this route, and melancholy is the change that has during the interval come over the once cheerful scene. Formerly, the traveller returning from the wide solitudes and scattered stations of the great squatting districts of the interior, feasted his eyes, and felt his heart gladdened, by the evidences of civilization, and signs of life and activity which everywhere met his view in passing down this fine valley of the Dartbrook. At every four or five miles neat homesteads surrounded and embellished by fruitful orchards, and spacious flower gardens tastefully laid out and nicely kept, gave evidence of prosperity and content, whilst luxuriant vineyards, well tilled

fields, and numerous corn stacks, attested the fertility and productiveness of the soil. All this has sadly changed during the last three years. The discovery of the gold mines, and consequent rush to the diggings, have converted this once smiling scene to one of ruin and desolation. Deserted houses, gardens choked with weeds, and broken fences, now everywhere meet the eye and depress the spirits. Sheep graze over the lands where late the busy ploughman pursued his healthful toil, the solitary shepherd chooses his habitation among the empty farm-buildings, and the once thronged cottages of the labourers are tenantless and falling to decay. A few farmers, encouraged by the present high prices of corn, yet struggle on against the disadvantages of exorbitant wages and a short supply of hands, but their lands look ill cultivated, and their homes unkept, wild, and neglected.

We travelled twenty miles to-day, and encamped early this evening on a fine grassy flat beside the Dartbrook, a short

distance from the village of Scone. Not long before we halted I observed a shepherd, who was tending his flock among the dilapidated enclosures of one of the ruined farms, rise from his seat beneath a tree, and make hurriedly towards us. As the man approached, with his keen eyes intently fixed upon me, he suddenly, with a gesture of surprise and delight, pronounced my name, and I at once recognised him as an aboriginal, named Coolan, son of a chief of the once powerful tribe that dwelt in this neighbourhood, and who in days of yore had often been the companion and attendant of myself and brothers during our hunting and fishing excursions. His eyes now filled as he spoke, and asked where we intended to halt, as after he should have driven his flock to the fold he would come to our camp fire, and tell me a long sad history of past years and present sorrows. Accordingly, soon after nightfall, Coolan made his appearance, bringing a roasted opossum as a present for Denny, then lighting his pipe,

he sat down by the fire, and began his melancholy tale. He told how the once numerous tribes of the Cámilarrai, who in his boyhood roamed the plains, and camped in the valleys of this wide district, hunted the kangaroo, sat at the council fires, made war or peace, and were the proud, free masters of the land; how the warlike Marowancal, the Tooloompikilal, the Gundical, and the fine intelligent tribe of Panin-pikilal, to which he himself belonged, had all sank, dropped off, died, and gradually disappeared, the miserable surviving remnant, some half dozen broken men, all gaining a livelihood like himself by tending sheep. It was fate, he said, and he expected soon to follow those who had gone before. Yet he admitted that a taste for ardent spirits, and the drunken habits into which his people fell, had doubtless much influenced their rapid melting away. The poor fellow was much affected. His story was indeed a mournful one, but might be repeated in all the older districts of the

colony. An inscrutable destiny would seem to ordain that the savage must yield his place upon the earth to civilized man. Not one of the tribes above enumerated had ever come into hostile collision with the white intruders, but had, from the first occupation of their country, remained on terms of the most perfect amity with the strangers. Yet all have been as surely and wholly swept away, as though to destroy and exterminate had been the aim of the new comers, instead of the humane desire to preserve and support their dark-skinned brethren ever evinced by the settlers in this locality.

Monday, 24th. We were off by times this morning; and, passing Redbank and Kiouga, came upon the broad flats of the Hunter at Negroa. Here Smith left me, to strike across by Muswell brook, impatient to reach the dwelling of his parents, which by this direct route was only fifteen miles distant, Denny and I pursuing our way alone. Every spot was now familiar,

though much altered during long years of absence by fences and enclosures, which greatly obstructed our way, and rendered it difficult to find an open space affording water and grass for our noonday halt.

Evening approached as we passed Bengalla, yet nine miles from Merton. The land, everywhere close fed with sheep, seemed to offer a poor prospect for our camp; but getting clear of the fences, however, we fortunately discovered on the river bank a retired nook affording sufficient grass for our purpose, and here we gladly pulled up as the day closed; and the sun, that had shone since noon with an almost summer warmth, was streaming his last rays through the clear western sky.

Tuesday, 25th. Rose this morning with the feeling that my work was done; and with the pleasant anticipation of soon finding myself among friends the nearest and the dearest. The early camp duties were briskly got through; and, after a thorough wash in the stream, we set cheerfully for-

ward. The toils and troubles of the long tedious journey are now past, and have not been encountered in vain. The horses, though a good deal reduced since leaving the Clarence, are still in excellent and very marketable condition; a condition they most assuredly would not have retained after travelling so far at this season of the year, unless driven with a degree of care and judgment which it is impossible to induce servants to exercise.

We soon entered upon the broad alluvial plains of Pickering. The sun again shone brightly in a cloudless sky, and we moved slowly and lazily on. The day was before us, and our horses eagerly cropped the young grass, which was springing where fire had lately passed over the blackened plain. The only drawback to my perfect contentment was a feeling of uncertainty as to whether I should find my friends at Merton. They were I knew about to quit permanently this cherished home of many years; and should I then find they had already departed?

About noon, we reached the little village of Merton, and the answer to my first anxious inquiry told me that my fears were not unfounded, for those I had hoped to meet were gone; when, however, a mile further on, I reached the old cottage—the home of my boyish days—I had the satisfaction to find a brother to bid me welcome. The dear old home looked empty and forsaken; but this feeling soon passed off and was forgotten in the society of my brother, who had much to show me, and much to talk over of plans and projects for the future.

Thus several days passed pleasantly away, during which time my horses rested and were all reshod; and, on Sunday, the 30th, the feed being very short in the paddocks, and the beasts rather losing than gaining flesh, I again set forward, travelling in the same mode as before. The first day and night, I had no other assistant than Denny; but Smith, in compliance with preconcerted arrangements, joined us as we passed his

dwelling at Jerry's Plains, fifteen miles from Merton, early in the morning of the second day. On the 2nd of August we reached Maitland; and, after a day's rest there, I embarked for Sydney, at sunrise on the morning of the 4th, on board the fine new steamboat Coleroy, taking with me as many of the horses as I could procure berths for, and leaving Smith to follow with the rest on the morrow.

We ran quickly down the river; but, owing to the state of the tide, were detained some hours at the *flats* near its mouth, before we could pass out, and consequently, though we had a smooth sea and fine passage, we did not reach Sydney till near ten o'clock in the evening.

When we got alongside the wharf, fresh delays arose. The crew, in the spirit of reckless, unthinking insubordination which has prevailed amongst men of this class since the discovery of the gold mines, refused to work, on the plea that it was too late; and it was only after much expostu-

lation on the part of the captain that the fellows yielded so far as to run out the stage, and prepare for the landing of the horses. This done, I quickly got mine ashore, and engaging the services of some of the numerous boys who always attend the arrival of steamers at the wharfs, the famished animals were soon lodged in the stables of Mr. Burt, veterinary surgeon and auctioneer, to whom their sale was intrusted, and I—my self-imposed task now fairly and successfully ended—hastening to Bent Street, soon found myself enjoying all the agreeable ease and comfort of the Australian Club. *

Sunday, August 6th. Last evening, Smith and Denny arrived safely with the remainder of the horses which, like their predecessors, were handed over to Mr. Burt. They are to be sold by auction after they have rested and refreshed for a few days; but, at eight shillings a head per night, it will not do to keep them long.

Yesterday, having joined the members of

my family, who are preparing to proceed to Europe at the same time with myself, we finally decided to go by the Overland or Red Sea route, which is conducted by steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. These ships depart from Sydney only every alternate month; and, as the last sailed but a few days ago, we have about six weeks to wait for the next. This is rather a long detention; but the interval we shall not, perhaps, find greatly too long for the full and final completion of all the arrangements for our protracted absence.

Denny has been all eyes and exclamations to-day, and will have much to tell his friends of the wonders of city life, when he gets back to his forest-home. He is now committed to the care of Smith, who is shortly to return to the Clarence. They leave Sydney to-morrow, and will take back with them the horses which we worked on the journey down, and which we left at Maitland.

Sunday, 20th. The time is passing

rapidly. This day four weeks we shall quit Sydney, if the steamer arrive to her time. My horses are sold, and realized prices which proved that the care and trouble bestowed to get them down from the Clarence in good condition were not thrown away. The prices were the best of the day, ranging from £75 downwards.

Thursday, 14th. The steam-ship, Madras, which is to carry us to Ceylon, arrived yesterday morning from Singapore. She is a noble vessel of 1,200 tons, and will sail punctually on her appointed day, the 20th inst. We have, therefore, set about in earnest to complete our preparations for the voyage, chosen our berths, and paid our passage-money.

Each cabin is fitted to receive three persons, and the charge hence to Southampton is £150 for each berth, or £360 for a whole cabin. I took a passage to Alexandria only, for which I paid £130, and secured an upper bed-place in a well-situated cabin near the foot of the companion stairs. My

friends selected the adjoining cabin, and booked all through to Southampton.

The Company liberally permit their passengers to remain at pleasure at any of the intermediate ports, and to resume their voyage by a subsequent vessel. A traveller may thus, if he please, spend twelve months on the way to England.

CHAPTER IV.

Embark on Board the Madras—Seasickness—The Howe—Hobson's Bay—Passage up the Yarra—Cole's Wharf—Streets of Melbourne—Price of Provisions, &c.—Visit to the Theatre—Ramble in the Environs—Boatmen—Omnibuses—Public and other Buildings—Railroad—Return on Board—Accession to the Passengers—Spencer's Gulf—Port Adelaide—Excursion on Shore—Scenery—Soil—An Agreeable Day—Return on Board.

WEDNESDAY, September 20th. At four, P.M., we got on board the Madras, as she lay with steam up and blue peter flying, about a mile below Pinchgut, proudly floating on the clear, sunny waters of Port Jackson. I have a dizzy recollection of hurried leave-takings and last sad adieus, those greatest, because most oft-recurring, sorrows of our common every-day life.

The anchor was speedily got up, and we steamed out of the heads, and I now found myself actually commencing a voyage to Europe. Evening soon after closed in.

The night was calm, and our gallant ship, propelled by the whirling screw, sped rapidly on with a motion so steady, that it were difficult to believe oneself on ship-board and afloat on the open sea, but for that undescribed and indescribable something; that subtle combination of cooks, galley, and engine-room; of rumblings, tremblings, and throbs; of hot oil, hot steam, and grease of steward's pantry, spirits, and scoured brass, which assails you, whether through the senses of smell, taste, or hearing, you cannot tell; which afflicts you like a tooth-ache, remorselessly pursues you whether above or below, and from which there is no escape, let the weather be never so fine, at the beginning of a steam voyage. Under its influence the rapturous exclamations of the lady-passengers, and their fervent admiration of the starry heavens and tranquil sea, gradually subsided, and they disappeared from the deck. The men, less susceptible, became silent and moody—some listlessly reclining upon the

benches, whilst others, more resolute, walked the deck with determined step.

At eleven o'clock, I went below to my berth, having succeeded in keeping up appearances for this evening, but feeling dismal misgivings for to-morrow.

Thursday, 21st. Turned out early and went on deck; the wind has changed to south, and is rising, with every appearance of a gale coming on. The steamer, *City of Sydney*, which left Port Jackson two hours before us, is in sight, on our lee beam.

By mid-day, the sea roughish, and the tormenting struggles of the last few hours resulting on all sides in total defeat, Neptune has prevailed. Passengers, looking yellow and flabby, are casting themselves into nooks and corners, reckless of personal appearance; whilst others, with desperate effort, reach the companion and dive below.

Being in no better condition than my neighbours, I lay down in my berth, and slept two or three hours. Afterwards going on deck, found the sky had cleared,

and the wind going down. By dinner-time, many of the passengers had sufficiently recovered to make their appearance at the table, but I was still numbered with the slain. At two, P.M., passed the Dromedary Mountain. The other steamer was nearly hull down, astern, by dusk this evening.

Friday, 22nd. Passed Cape Howe last night; but, as we turn westward, the wind works round and constantly heads us: it is light, however, to-day, and the sea smooth. Passengers are getting on their legs again and becoming sociable—my friends among the number—quite putting me to shame.

Our rival in the race is keeping away to starboard, intending apparently to save some distance by shaving closer than we shall do to Wilson's Promontory, which we are approaching, but shall not reach before night. This is to be regretted, as the scenery of that part of the coast is said to be extremely fine and bold. We have been out of sight of land a great part of the day.

Saturday, 23rd. Wind still ahead, and

blowing fresh. Our companion has passed us in the night, and is now leading the way towards Port Philip Heads thirty or forty miles distant. We entered the bay about noon, and set all sail, as our course across the great estuary being to the northward, brought the wind fair.

We had now an opportunity for the first time to try what our good ship could accomplish under canvass, and gallantly did she acquit herself, running across to Hobson's Bay, thirty miles in two hours, and so rapidly overhauling the City of Sydney, that, though the latter entered the heads half an hour in advance, we, with lowered sails, were gliding through the crowded vessels to our berth, as she let go her anchor not two minutes before us.

A heavy shower of rain and hail coming on as we approached the harbour, gave the place a cold and gloomy appearance. A steamer came alongside as soon as the anchor dropped, to take passengers to Melbourne. I shipped myself, in com-

pany with half-a-dozen others, spite of the rain that continued to fall steadily, and proceeded up the Yarra, which is very narrow, but apparently deep, and more like a muddy canal than a river. Seven miles up the stream we reached Cole's Wharf, amid a crowd of lighters and small coasting craft which here filled the river.

Busy crowds thronged this the principal quay of the golden city. Every shed and warehouse was crammed with merchandize. Great stacks of the same, piled in the open air, encumbered the wharf, whilst more was arriving and being unloaded from lighter and barge. A perfect plethora seemed to afflict this overgorged place. .

The moment we landed, the rain having nearly ceased, we set out to explore the town; and, contrary to expectation, found the streets well Macadamized and in excellent condition; but the footways badly paved and very slippery with greasy black mud. The streets are wide, perfectly straight, and cross each other at right-angles in the

direction of the cardinal points of the compass, and the city is pleasantly situated amid gently undulating grassy downs, about two miles in a direct line from the nearest part of the beach.

A bend of the little river Yarra, which is crossed by a fine stone bridge, skirts the lower side of the town, and separates it from the bay. The land between the river and the beach is a dead level—very low, marshy, and liable to inundation. On the other side, Mount Macedon, and the hills towards Geelong, are fine objects in the distance.

After a short stroll, impelled by the fierce hunger of persons just escaped from ship-board, we retreated for lunch to the famed Criterion Hotel. The fare was beef-steak and potatoes, for which, with the addition of a bottle of claret among three, we paid eight and sixpence each. This done, we sallied forth again to purchase a few trifles forgotten in the hurry of leaving Sydney. The shops all appear overstocked with

imported goods of every description, and customers scarce. As a sample of prices, I subjoin my bill:—Leghorn hat, nine and sixpence; gloves, three and sixpence; cap, three shillings. But the prices of all local productions are still very high; eggs, seven shillings per dozen; butter, four to six shillings per pound; and other things in proportion.

Towards sunset, we got upon an omnibus, and made an excursion to the very pretty suburb of St. Kilda—the distance three miles, and fare *only* half-a-crown each way. During this ride we passed the site of the famed Canvass Town; no vestige of which now, however, remains; tents and gunyahs have been all cleared away. Later, we concluded the evening with a visit to a large new Theatre just completed, and calculated to hold 2,000 persons. It has been hastily fitted up, with a view, it is said, to attract hither Miss Catherine Hayes, the vocalist, and great star of the day, who has lately arrived from Europe, and is now in Sydney,

where there is no Theatre capable of accommodating so large an audience. The entertainment this evening was an instrumental concert, and some of the music very good—a Monsieur Fleury being the leader, and principal performer.

Not feeling disposed to renew our acquaintance with our cabins on board sooner than was necessary, we sought quarters at an old established hotel known to one of our party, but of which I forget the name. Here we had a capital dinner, and found good beds—luxuries we were well disposed to enjoy after the confinement and discomfort of our narrow berths.

Sunday, 24th. As we sat at breakfast this morning, through the open windows could be seen, in the distance, herds of oxen browsing on the green pastures of the lightly-wooded grass lands on the outskirts of the city. In what contrast with the wild rocks, romantic bays, and dark forest scenes, which on all sides encompass Sydney!

The day was spent rambling about Mel-

bourne and its pretty environs. The weather was bright and fine, but cold, with a strong southerly wind which swept with great force over the open downs beyond the town, and raised such a sea in Hobson's bay as made the passing to and fro from the ships to the shore a work of difficulty, and involved the risk of a ducking. One of our fellow-passengers, a young Romish priest, who came ashore this morning, and afterwards remembered having left his trunk containing all his money open on board, was obliged to pay one of the extortionate boatmen £3 to put him off again. The fellow, at first, demanded £5, though the ship lay less than half a mile from the jetty.

All day, omnibuses and public conveyances of every kind ply about the city and suburbs, in surprizing numbers; but, indeed, everything is here on a wonderfully great scale, the age of the place considered.

The town itself spreads over an immense extent of ground; but the shops and houses are small, and the number of large or hand-

some structures of any description is very limited. The most imposing are the new National School, just completed, the edifice for the Exhibition, and the new Hospital. Some of the Churches and other public buildings, with many of the stores and warehouses, being constructed of the dark volcanic rock of the neighbourhood, have a very gloomy and dismal appearance. The iron shops and storehouses which abound are also very unsightly. Altogether, in architectural effect—in the size and appearance of the shops and general aspect of the town—Melbourne is very inferior to Sydney. A railroad from the city to the port at Liardet's beach, two miles distant, has lately been completed, and to-day hundreds of people were indulging their curiosity in experimental trips. A small tender-engine, drawing a single truck, is, however, the only means of transit, and this crammed with holiday-makers of every condition has run backwards and forwards all day—crowds awaiting their turn at either end of the line.

An ambitious attempt of the Melbournites to build a locomotive for themselves has signally failed; the lumbering machine broke down after a short-lived triumph.

Locomotives have, however, been ordered from England, and the little tender-engine, which is running to-day, is the first that has arrived.

Monday, 25th. Bidding adieu to Melbourne, we returned on board the Madras at nine o'clock, and, before twelve, were steaming across the bay with a clear sky, and every indication of fine weather; cleared the heads some time before sunset, and, dismissing our pilot, stood away for Cape Otway Light.

Many passengers joined us at Melbourne, among them three Parsee merchants from Bombay; the rest are English, Irish, and Scotch. We now muster above seventy in the cabin. Our crew is composed of Lascars, except the boatswain and half-a-dozen quarter-masters. The numerous cabin-servants are mostly Chinese, so we have a

pretty motley collection. My cabin mates are a Moreton Bay Squatter and an officer of the Indian Army—both gentlemen and agreeable fellows—so I consider myself fortunate.

Tuesday, 26th. Wind westerly, and rising, by noon blowing strong, and everybody looking yellow and doleful again. Tried to keep a good face on matters, but it would not do, so I went below, and turned in. During the evening the gale increased, and sea got up considerably. Our ship rides gallantly; but her long sharp prow dives into the advancing waves, to the great discomfort of the shivering Lascars, and destruction of poultry in the coops forward.

Wednesday, 27th. Wind moderating this morning, but sea very rough. As the day advanced the wind died away; and towards evening the waves were nearly down. Shortly after dusk sighted the light on Kangaroo Island; and, entering the smooth waters of Spencer's Gulf about ten o'clock,

we were all soon in high spirits, and forgot our troubles in the pleasant anticipation of to-morrow's run on shore.

Thursday, 28th. Was awakened this morning by the discharge of our two guns, as we came to anchor off Port Adelaide. I dressed hastily; and, going on deck, found a shore-boat already alongside; and as the captain had announced his intention to sail again in the afternoon, I, with such of my fellow-travellers as were awake and stirring, hurried off to the shore, to see as much as the limited time would allow of the model colony and city of Adelaide. The purser was also of our party, going in quest of vegetables and fresh beef.

We were charged ten shillings each for a passage to the nearest land at the pilot station, about two miles from the ship, and had then a heavy trudge of a mile over the deep sands of Le Fèvre's peninsula to the port; but here our troubles ended. A well-Macadamised and perfectly level road of eight miles leads from the port to the city,

and along this we were soon going at a slapping pace, in a sort of spring-cart, with two horses driven tandemwise.

Adelaide is prettily situated at the foot of a range of lightly-wooded hills, rising at their highest point to an elevation of 2,400 feet. To the northwards, far as the eye can reach, extends a level plain, mostly enclosed and cultivated. Much cultivation also appears upon the lower slopes of the range, which, stretching in the same direction, bounds the plain on the right. Higher up the mountains, in shady nooks and valleys, can be distinguished numerous cottages and villas, the summer retreats of the more wealthy citizens. To the southward high barren ranges close the view.

The soil of the plain is of a dark red colour, and appears good: the green crops looked well, and the gardens, though we heard many complaints of the dryness of the season, were very gay with flowers. The city stands near the bank of the Torrens, upon a ridge of soft white limestone, which is

extensively used for building, but appears very soft and perishable for the purpose. The red soil pulverizes very readily, and renders the town and neighbourhood extremely dusty in blowing weather.

The Torrens is very unlike all Australian rivers I have ever seen so near the sea, and more resembles a mountain brook. The bed is gravelly, and quite devoid of mud; and the stream, though very shallow, is rapid and clear. The forest here consists almost exclusively of a variety of white-barked gum, differing from any I have seen elsewhere.

Made a few purchases to meet shipboard wants, and found prices lower than at Melbourne or Sydney. After a day very agreeably spent, we returned to the port in a capital four-horse coach, again laboured through the hot sands of the peninsula, reached the ship at five; and, in an hour afterwards, were once more steaming on our way.

CHAPTER V.

Departure from Adelaide—Black Whales—Weather in the Great Australian Bight—King George's Sound—Profusion of Wild Flowers—Convict Aborigines—Wretched Inns—Beautiful Harbour—Lady Sp—r's Hermitage—Interesting Group of Aboriginal Children—Recalled on Board—Last View of Australia—Cape Chapman—Violent Storm—Loss of Boats and Masts.

FRIDAY, 29th. At length we are blessed with a fair wind and calm sea, and are hurrying on our voyage at the rate of ten knots and a half an hour. All the passengers in high spirits, and at the dinner-table to-day. Distance from Adelaide at noon one hundred and eighty-two miles.

Saturday, 30th. Weather still fine but calm. Our fair wind has already deserted us, and we have no sail set. Three black whales kept up a race with us at about a gunshot distance, and afforded us a fine view of their great unwieldy forms. Ban

from noon yesterday to noon to-day two hundred and thirty-six miles. In the afternoon encountered a very long swell rolling in from the south-westward, making the ship tumble distressingly, and telling, we fear, of bad weather ahead.

Sunday, October 1st. The swell continues and increases, and the ship rolls terribly, bringing on seasickness again with many of the passengers, myself among the number.

The captain read prayers in the cabin in the forenoon, all the passengers attending. This evening the wind foul and rising. Distance run only one hundred and ninety-four miles, owing to the heavy swell, which greatly impedes our way.

Monday, 2nd. The wind this morning still ahead, gradually increased to a perfect gale. The demon—seasickness—has now fairly got hold upon me. I was unable to leave my berth all day. The proverbial bad weather of the Great Australian Bight we are not, it appears, destined to escape; but it is my great consolation to find that

my mother, for whom were all my fears at the outset, bears up bravely, and makes a capital sailor. Towards evening the weather moderated a little. Distance run to-day rather less than yesterday, being only one hundred and eighty-two miles.

Tuesday, 3rd. Last night, the gale again increased, and to-day blows with violence, veering from a little north to as much south of west. Sighted the land about noon, and made out the distance to King George's Sound to be still seventy-five miles. Towards evening, the gale became perfectly furious: the ship, pitching bows under, carried away jib-boom and fore-topgallant mast, and soon after the stern-boat was struck by a sea and stove.

Strangely enough the storm has cured me of my seasickness; I got on deck during the morning, and this evening am quite well. The listless inaction and absence of excitement in a shipboard life are, I fancy, a principal cause of my ailments. Our progress, still decreasing, only reached one

hundred and thirty-one miles at noon to-day.

Wednesday, 4th. The gale, dead against us, continued through the night with unabated fury, but our gallant ship still resolutely holds her way, and forces through it, making three knots in the teeth of the storm. By sunrise, we were closing up to the heads at the entrance to King George's Sound. Bold masses of granite, white, bare and treeless, rising sheer from the ocean, and defying the mighty billows which dashed with mad fury against their naked sides. As we neared the land, we gained some shelter from the raging storm, and our speed increased. By ten o'clock, we entered the port, and soon after came to moorings in the perfectly land-locked inner harbour, alongside the coal hulk belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

With a number of fellow-passengers, I immediately proceeded to land in a boat from the town, if a group of wretched buildings near the beach can be so called. The

water was rough, and our small bark, being much overloaded, and rowed by a somewhat unskilful crew of aborigines dressed in their kangaroo cloaks, and resplendent in grease and paint, it appeared very doubtful whether we should reach the shore without a swim for it. However, by allowing ourselves to go to leeward, and landing half-a-mile below the jetty, we managed to get ashore safe and dry. Delighted to find our feet once more on *terra firma*, we set forward directly for a ramble among the hills, and soon loaded ourselves with wild flowers, of which we found here a greater profusion and variety than we have ever seen elsewhere. A bold granite peak, which we climbed, afforded a fine view of the harbour and surrounding country, which appears densely timbered and scrubby, affording little or no pasture.

The place is said to contain five hundred inhabitants; though, from appearances, I should have thought half that number an extreme estimate. Here is a small penal

establishment—an offset from that at Swan River. Among the convicts, we observed two aboriginal blacks working in chains, who, on inquiry, we learned have been condemned for sheep-stealing to six months' labour. They have already served one-third of their time, yet look in good condition, and seem cheerful. Numbers of natives of all sexes and ages, were about the village: at least a moiety of the children are half-casts.

Dead and stagnant as the place appears, there are yet two tenements assuming the title of inns—wretched places, with sanded floors, and all other interior arrangements in keeping. One of these we entered; and, after fruitless inquiries for oysters, fish, flesh, or fowl, we brought mine host to the reluctant admission that dry bread is the only eatable his house just now affords, which, with brandy and bottled beer, constitutes his whole present stock for supplying the bodily wants of strangers.

The man has, he told us, lived twenty

years in this dreary spot; and has, as a natural consequence, fallen into a kind of torpid stupor, from which he was not to be roused. Our many questions elicited but few replies; and, when his slow, reluctant lips did give forth a drawling response, it was only to let us know that he was ignorant of the matter upon which we sought information. He could not tell how the convicts were employed, "never went to look." How far it was to Perth, and how near the Swan River Stock Stations approached to this place he did not know, "he never went far from home."

Baffled in all attempts to obtain food for body or mind, we quitted this remarkable hotel; and bearing off the wild flowers, the produce of our morning's ramble, we returned on board just in time to take our places at the dinner-table, and well disposed to do justice to the abundant good cheer.

Thursday, 5th. A bright, calm morning tempted all the passengers, ladies included, on shore; and pencils and sketch-books,

were brought into requisition, to commit to paper the very striking scenery of this beautiful harbour.

During our rambles, we came upon the hermitage of Lady Sp——r, the widow of a former governor of Swan River, who has strangely chosen this world-forgotten spot for her residence. We were courteously received by her ladyship, who very hospitably entertained us. The house which I may most appropriately describe as an agglomeration of cottages, appears commodious and roomy, and is very prettily situated, surrounded by a garden, and commanding a fine view of the entrance to the bay, and the picturesque islands which lie outside. A few acres of good dark soil at this spot are in remarkable contrast to the white granite sands of the whole surrounding country.

During our walk, we also fell in with an interesting group of young aboriginal children, all females, who, in charge of a very nice-looking European girl, were rambling

among the rocks and gathering flowers. They were all plainly but neatly dressed, and looked remarkably clean. At the bidding of their conductress, they sang a simple hymn for our edification. On inquiry, we learned that the little creatures are the offspring of the wild-looking blacks we had seen about the settlement, and that they are maintained and instructed in a school expressly devoted to the purpose. The parents are allowed to visit them when they please; and, like fathers and mothers in more civilized life, are vastly proud of their daughters' acquirements.

At four, P.M., we were all recalled on board, and soon afterwards, the coaling having been completed, the anchor was got up, and we ran out of this splendid harbour, where we have spent two most agreeable days. The wind is at length fair, and the sea, lately so rough, has quite gone down during the twenty hours' calm since last evening. At midnight, we were tearing along at ten knots, under a clear sky

and bright full moon, and I lingered on deck to take a long parting view—may it not be my last view—of the fast-receding shores of sunny Australia.

Friday, 6th. We passed Cape Chapman, the turning point of the Australian coast, but without sighting land, early this morning, and are now steering to the northward of west, and nearly on our course for Ceylon. Breeze at north-east blowing fresh, and ship running eleven knots. In the afternoon got topgallant and royal yards aloft, and sails set; but this was no sooner done than the wind fell, and suddenly chopped round to the north-west, dead ahead again. Distance at noon from the sound one hundred and seventy-five miles.

Saturday, 7th. The persecuting wind has again increased, and to-day blows a gale from the south-west on our port-beam. By three, P.M., the gale had become a perfect tempest: the sea struck our starboard life boat, tore away the davits, and the

splendid little bark, borne rapidly down to leeward, could long be seen in the distance buoyantly topping the mighty waves, and sporting with the angry surge.

Shortly afterwards, the maintop-mast snapped close to the cap, and went over the side, with topgallant and royal yards across. The few English sailors, now all on deck, made every exertion to clear and get in the wreck, which, suspended by a tangled mass of ropes and shrouds, came thundering against the side at every surge of the ship, smashed the starboard quarter-boat, and threatened to carry away the bulwarks also, before it could be secured, the shivering Lascars affording but little assistance.

Efforts were now made, but too late, to get down the fore-topgallant and fore royal yards, the sails upon which had blown loose, and the stay-sail having carried away the fore-topmast stay, the mast was in evident danger. Our small band of English seamen nothing daunted, however, went

briskly aloft, reluctantly followed by some of the boldest Lascars, and set themselves to secure the tattered sails. The mast swung fearfully to and fro; and the dangerous position of the men became so imminent, that the order was passed for all to come down. In an instant the Lascars were on deck, sliding down backstays, and descending by the quickest possible means. The English, on the contrary, reluctantly abandoned their task; and not until they had been a second time hailed did they attend to the command. They were scarcely on deck, however, when the mast came down with an awful crash—so narrowly did these fine fellows escape an untimely fate. We have now a most ruined and helpless appearance, with night closing, the storm as furious as ever, and a fearful sea; but our fine ship rides beautifully, lightly mounting the tremendous waves, which seem advancing to overwhelm her, and taking but little water on deck. Before the evening was far advanced the

wreck of both masts was disposed of, and the ship laid to under easy steam. The distance run to-day was one hundred and seventy-three miles.

Sunday, 8th. Storm continued with unabated violence last night till past ten o'clock, when it began to moderate, and the wind came in fitful gusts. To-day it still blows hard, with a very heavy sea. Regularly on my beam-ends with seasickness again. The motion of the ship violent and most distressing to one so afflicted. Distance run only one hundred and thirty-four miles.

Monday, 9th. Wind moderate, but sea still very rough; and the swell being nearly on the beam, still makes the ship roll fearfully, causing awful sounds as of falling avalanches of glass and crockery to issue from the recesses of the cook-house and steward's pantries, those mysterious narrow cells, whence, in storm and tempest, as in sunshine and calm, whether our ship is sailing like a summer boat, or tossed, rolled,

and tumbled, on the mountain billows of a raging sea, daily come forth those wondrous dinners, fish, flesh, and fowl, curries, hashes, and ragouts, puddings, jellies, custards, and pies, all from that small enchanted space, like the hundred drinks from the bottle of the conjuror. Many were the mishaps at the dinner-table to-day, despite of racks, puddings, and other ingenious contrivances for confining restless plates and dishes to their proper stations.

Notwithstanding the rolling sea, we are making capital way with trysails and square foresail set, all the canvass that our stumpy masts now permit us to carry. The screw was detached for a couple of hours to-day, whilst the rudder chains, which had got adrift, were secured. Under sail alone, we made but three knots, though the wind was on the quarter, and blowing fresh. The ladies, who have not shown much for the last three days, are beginning to revive again. For myself, I was able to get out

a little this evening, but feel very shaky still, and must confess myself a wretched sailor. Our run to-day was a capital one—no less than two hundred and fifty-three miles.

Tuesday, 10th. Wind still from the same quarter, but quite moderate, and the sea nearly down. Westerly weather is very unusual so far north as we have now reached (lat. $24^{\circ} 13'$). It was expected that we should have fallen in with the south-east trade some degrees further south. It is also singularly cool for our present latitude, the mercury not rising above 66 degrees of Fahrenheit at noon, about which figure, or from two to three degrees lower, it has ranged for some days past. This afternoon, a new fore-topmast was got up. Wind died quite away in the evening.

Wednesday, 11th. We have at length the wind from the south-east, but light with a calm sea. The difference of temperature is very perceptible and most agreeable. Thermometer stood at 74° at noon. All

the ladies on deck and quite gay, and the miseries of the late storm are already nearly forgotten. Lat. $21^{\circ} 24'$ south ; long. $103^{\circ} 40'$ east. Distance run two hundred and twenty-nine miles.

Thursday, 12th. Weather serene, bright, and delicious; south-east breeze continues, and is a little fresher than yesterday. Passengers all coming out in summer attire, and our three Parsees, who have been great sufferers during the bad weather, have now got upon deck, and in their thin light dresses of whitest muslins and conical, high-crowned caps, are seated enjoying the warm sunshine, and soft genial air.

Whilst they were washing decks this morning, I turned out and got myself well soused with two or three buckets of sea water, which has done me a great deal of good. We made a fair run of two hundred and thirty-five miles. Thermometer at noon 82° . Lat. $18^{\circ} 48'$ south; long. $100^{\circ} 40'$ east.

Friday, 13th. Still running on at ten to

eleven knots. Wind at north-east and light. About noon freshened to a nice breeze, but shifted more to the northwards. All the sails, however, still drawn. A fresh main-topmast was got up to-day, manufactured from the wrecks of the two old ones, as there was not a new spar on board suited to the purpose. We are now prepared to take full advantage of the trade winds if we fall in with them, of which we, however, almost despair, as we have reached lat. 16°, and long. 97° 56'. Thermometer 81°.

CHAPTER VI.

The Shark and the "Screw"—Evenings on Deck—Value of Bath-rooms on Board Ship—Failure of the Trade-wind—An Alarm, and something more, in the Ladies' Cabin—Our Crawling Lascars—A Novel Chinese Punishment—Chinese Value of Life—Bellicose Effect of Tropical Heat on the Passengers—A Terrified Man of Letters—The "Line:" Neptune's "Occupation gone"—A Weary Curlew—Solitude of a Lonely Sea—A Cause of Excitement—Passengers' Grievances—A Document and its Originators.

SATURDAY, October 14th. Dead calm and no sail set, but our stately ship, obeying the invisible busy screw, glides swiftly over the tranquil sea. A delicious softness pervades the air; and though we have reached so low a latitude, the heat is by no means excessive, or even more than agreeable. We saw great numbers of flying-fish to-day, and a solitary shark followed some time in our wake, apparently considering whether the whirling and splashing screw was not some unknown fish which he might venture

to attack. An albatross, too, occasionally sweeps close under the stern to make a near inspection. At noon we were in lat. $13^{\circ} 19'$, long. $95^{\circ} 10'$, with the mercury at 86° .

The voyage is now proceeding very pleasantly: we are all becoming acquainted, and many are finding out each other's good qualities, and beginning to form friendships. In the warm fine evenings, we sit late on deck; the younger ladies sing whilst their mammas converse, and anecdotes and conundrums promote the general good humour. Some of the young ladies are clever with pencils, too, and when the mornings are calm these are in active operation. Woe, then, to the unwary mortal who becomes in any way conspicuous, either by attitude or costume. He is speedily *fixed* by these mischievous and clever artists. All is, however, done in mere fun and good humour. One or two sensitive gentlemen passengers make off forward, or vanish below, when the sketch-books appear upon deck; but all

their vigilance has not saved them, their portraits are to be seen in those dreaded pages among pigtailed Chinamen and turbaned Lascars.

Sunday, 15th. Calm day again—rather hotter than it has hitherto been—with some swell from the southward, which causes the ship to roll a little. Distance run at noon, two hundred and thirty miles. Lat. $10^{\circ} 18'$, long. $92^{\circ} 45'$, and thermometer 84° . We are now but 1,234 miles from Point de Galle; and, if the present weather continues, shall reach it in five days. Since we came into warm weather, the two nice bath-rooms with which the ship is provided have been brought into play; one of them, which was occupied as a sort of lumber-room by the purser, has been cleared out by order of the captain, and both are now regularly supplied with water, and in much request. I take a bath every morning at sunrise, and find much advantage from the practice.

Monday, 16th. This morning, we have a breeze from the southward blowing rather

fresh, the ship going eleven knots; but the heat somewhat oppressive, notwithstanding. It is thought to be the trade-wind that has at length overtaken us, though we are now in a lower latitude than that to which it usually extends. The Madras, on her last passage to Sydney, the captain complains, had to contend with the south-east trade then against her, as high as lat. 32° ; whilst now that it would be a fair wind we have come down nearly to the seventh degree without finding it; though, at this season, it is supposed to blow regularly. In a sailing-vessel this would have been a serious piece of ill-luck; but, with us, it has made little difference, at least so far as we passengers are concerned; but, to the Company who own the ship, it has caused considerable loss in a large consumption of coal during a part of the voyage, where it is customary to disconnect the screw and sail under canvass alone.

There is considerable excitement on board to-day, particularly among the lady pas-

sengers, in consequence of an incident which occurred last night. On more than one occasion since leaving Sydney, at the dead hour of the night, and after the carpenter's mates have put out all the cabin lights, save one solitary lamp which swings with eccentric wearisome motion in the midst of the saloon—the stillness has been broken by the cry of “*a man!*” issuing from one or the other of two cabins wholly occupied by ladies. Great has been the commotion. Passengers, suddenly awakened, have rushed from their cabins to inquire whether it was fire, or only the engine broken down. Officers have turned out, searched nooks and corners, and mustered the cabin servants, but still the *man* was never to be discovered, and had never been sufficiently seen to be described.

In the next morning discussions which followed, the affair was variously set down among the male passengers as the effect of imagination, as a dream, as the result of a heavy supper, nightmare, &c., &c.; but the

ladies stuck to each other, and declared they could not be mistaken, that they had heard a step and felt a hand. One of the fair even went so far as to affirm, though she had seen nothing, that it *must* be a certain officer of the ship, who, poor wight, although a bit of a dandy and admirer of the sex, was not to be thought capable of such doings as these. All remained mystery, suspicion, and doubt; the accused was wrath, and the captain much annoyed and perplexed.

Last night, however, one of the persecuted fair ones, whilst lying awake with the curtains which hang before the cabin doors purposely a little withdrawn, observed one of the Chinese cuddy-servants stealthily enter the saloon, extinguish the lamp, and then coming straight into the cabin, he began groping about as before, and laid his hand upon one of the sleepers. The alarm was now given, but the fellow again succeeded in passing unobserved to his berth; and these pigtailed gentry are all so much

alike, that the momentary view obtained before the light was extinguished, does not enable the lady who watched, to be quite sure of the man. Strong suspicion, however, falls upon Ai Youg, a good-looking merry fellow, and one of the most efficient and obliging servants in the ship. A trial and investigation are going on; and, should the wretched Celestial be judged guilty, I fancy the boatswain will be called upon to perform in a little tragedy at the fore-rigging.

We have made a good run to-day, two hundred and forty-seven miles, and the weather, though warm in the morning, has been extremely agreeable. Latitude at noon, $7^{\circ} 4'$, long. $90^{\circ} 9'$, thermometer only $84'$. Galle is now less than one thousand miles distant.

This evening the screw was disconnected to try, it was said, how we could get along without its aid; but, in reality, I am inclined to believe, in order to rectify something that had gone wrong about the en-

gine. If the former were the object, the result of the experiment was most unsatisfactory; for, with all sail set, we could not make above five knots. Soon after the screw was set going again, the wind shifted suddenly, and took all aback. Fortunately, it did not blow hard, or something must have gone, for our crawling Lascars, who appear not only deficient in bodily strength, but very reluctant to exert so much as they possess, moved so unwillingly, that it was half-an-hour before the studding-sails were got in, and about another hour before all was made snug. There would assuredly be much danger for a sailing-vessel manned by such a crew.

Tuesday, 17th. Ai Youg was yesterday found guilty, and sentenced to be put in handcuffs, and tied up by his tail; he is now accordingly on deck looking very woeful, with his tail attached to the main-mast; and, as the poor fellow believes, the scorn of all beholders. This punishment is, it seems, considered among Chinamen

the greatest degradation; but though so much dreaded, may be safely inflicted, whilst the use of corporal punishment, as the following anecdote will show, may sometimes lead to very unhappy results:—

Our captain tells that he once resolved to flog one of his Chinese boatmen, who had committed a theft on board; and accordingly ordered him into the hands of the boatswain for a couple of dozen. The captain himself stood by to see the punishment inflicted. The man quietly looked on, whilst the usual preparations were made; but when, these completed, he was desired to strip, he made a sudden bound—and, before any of the bystanders could prevent him, leaped overboard into the sea.

A boat was instantly lowered, and every exertion made to save the unhappy wretch, who, however, sank at once, and never returned to the surface. As may be supposed, the captain has never since attempted to flog a Chinaman. The value which these people set upon their own lives is not, it

would appear, very great, and, as might be expected, they do not rate the lives of others much higher. In New South Wales, instances have occurred of Chinese servants murdering their overseers and employers, upon very slight provocation; and at my own station, shortly before my departure from the Colony, one of these singular people who was in my service, and employed as a shepherd, having lost some sheep from his flock, and failing to recover them next day, went to his hut, and there deliberately swallowed several pieces of poisoned meat with which he had been furnished to destroy wild dogs. The poison was strychnine; and, of course, the poor creature almost immediately died before even the fact of his having taken it could be reported. Yet this man was a favourite servant, was generally of a happy, cheerful disposition, and had no serious consequences to apprehend.

The day was dark and close, with showers of almost warm water. The sun has scarcely been visible, only breaking out

a little while about noon; yet the heat is greater than we have heretofore felt it. However, we have now got to the northward of the sun, who is advancing into the southern tropic, and we shall every day be running further away from him. We had a good breeze during the morning on our starboard quarter, but at mid-day it fell calm.

Our passengers, who, up to this time, have all got on very amicably together, have now, their blood perhaps inflamed by the tropical heats, become, all at once, a part of them at least, extremely bellicose. At the lower end of the dinner-table this afternoon, as we sat over the dessert, such choice expressions as "infernal liar" and "d—d scoundrel" became distinctly audible, followed by gunpowder resolves, and allusions to four o'clock appointments for the fore-deck to-morrow morning. All ended, however, in vapour, instead of smoke, and apologies were exchanged in place of shots.

We have also at a card table had one of

our officers threatened with a blow by a gray and bearded newspaper editor from Hong Kong, but the fiery little sailor, promptly arming himself with a pike from the arms'-rack close by, assumed so business-like an attitude, that the terrified man of letters was fain to recall his threats, and surrender at discretion.

These little episodes serve to relieve the tedium of sea life, but are rather amusing than desirable.

At noon, we were in lat. $4^{\circ} 2'$, long. $87^{\circ} 38'$, having run two hundred and thirty-six miles. We are now distant from Galle only seven hundred and fifty miles. Thermometer stood at 85° .

Wednesday, 18th. Bright pleasant day, and though the mercury has risen to 88° , the heat is not so oppressive as yesterday.

This afternoon, during dinner, we crossed the equator, that mysterious line of the sailors. Neptune, however, allowed us to pass unheeded, not even vouchsafing us the customary loud hail from the water and

authoritative inquiry as to our business and destination. Perhaps his Marine God-head does not claim authority over steamers which at his time of life he may find it difficult to overtake.

A poor curlew came on board to-day quite exhausted, and ran about the deck braving every danger, and even allowing itself to be caught and handled, rather than again trust itself abroad on the wing.

Thursday, 19th. Last night the wind got up a little from south-west, and blew rather freshly, with rain, compelling us to close our cabin-ports on the weather side. To-day, the breeze continued with showers during the forenoon; ship going eleven knots, ran two hundred and fifty-three miles; lat. $2^{\circ} 48'$ north, long. $83^{\circ} 13'$, thermometer, 84° . A sail in sight to-day bound to the southward.

Throughout our passage from the Australian coast, the solitude of this lonely sea has been very remarkable. We have met no fellow-wanderers upon the ocean,

nor seen even whales, or other large fish. During last night, a fine flying-fish blundered in at one of the open ports, coming plump against the shoulders of the startled purser, who, in revenge, sent the luckless creature to the cook to be fried.

At noon, we were but two hundred and sixty-nine miles distant from Point de Galle, which we confidently expect to reach tomorrow. The first stage of our long journey is now nearly completed—the first act of this comedy of life is about to close—the scene will shift, and fresh actors come upon the stage.

At Galle, we quit the Madras, which goes on to Singapore, whilst we await the coming of the steamer from Calcutta, to carry us on to Suez.

Under these circumstances, one would suppose that all asperities would be softened, that all heart-burnings occasioned by any want of suavity in the manner of the captain and his officers, or other trifling grievances, real or imaginary, would be for-

given and forgotten, and that every one would desire to part on good terms with the ship that has borne us all safely and pleasantly, so swiftly, and so far. But no; a paper was to-day circulated among the passengers in the form of a letter to the directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, casting much censure upon the officers, and calling in question the treatment of the crew, and general management of the ship.

Few have put their names to this document, and the strangely-assorted triumvirate with whom it originated—a lawyer, a soldier, and a priest—begin to find themselves in an unpleasant predicament, and are diligently canvassing for signatures, but with small success. Some who at first joined the movement, have since become alarmed by the sound of the word libel, and wish to withdraw their names, but this the trio, now seriously uneasy at their conspicuous and isolated position, refuse to permit, and great is the excitement, heat, and discussion.

CHAPTER VII.

First Sight of the Coast of Ceylon—A Milder Document and a Stormy Scene—Point de Galle, and a Race against Time—A Pilot Mobbed for News—A Solitary Visit to Land—A Cingalese Boat's Crew—Indian Fairyland—A Supper at "Lorrett's"—Cingalese Bedchambers—Lamplight and Daylight Visions—The Madras at Anchor—Importunities of Native Dealers—A Disappointment about Home News—A Stroll through the Streets—Strange Disguises—The Baffled Triumvirate again at Work, and again Defeated—A Party for the Interior of the Island.

FRIDAY, 20th. Showery day, misty and warm. Passengers all busy taking down the fittings of their cabins, and packing up ready for the shore. About noon, we got a welcome sight of the coast of Ceylon, near Dondra head; but it was soon shut in again by the thick vapours which entirely conceal the island, and disappoint us of a view of Adam's Peak, which, in clear weather, is visible thirty miles from the land.

The unpopular letter of yesterday has been suppressed: another, much milder and less objectionable in its language, substituted, and signatures are again requested; but the passengers—many of whom, under the influence of some slight feelings of discontent, would have put their names to a moderate expression of dissatisfaction with some of the arrangements of the purser and other minor matters, but disgusted at the violence and injustice of yesterday's attack—have now taken sides, and are regularly divided into parties. Those who declined to sign yesterday refuse to have anything to do with the letter of to-day, and the small minority are greatly incensed at their defeat.

Later in the day, at the conclusion of dinner—the last that we shall here assemble to discuss—a very stormy scene arose. The captain, in temperate language, and with the approbation of the large majority of his hearers, gave expression to his views and opinions of the whole proceeding, and

concluded by demanding copies of both letters. Great excitement followed; and, after some speech-making, the party broke up, amid much confusion and discord.

The rain and mist cleared as evening approached, and the low shores and light-house of Point de Galle were descried not more than six or seven miles ahead. Perched in the foretop, I feasted my eyes upon the view. The entrance to the port lay right before us, but it is encumbered with sunken rocks and may not be approached after dark. It was now a race against time, for night was closing fast.

We saw a large steamer, probably the packet from Bombay, come smoking up from the westward, and pass into the harbour. But we, alas, were too late: darkness was gathering o'er land and sea as we reached the open roadstead outside, where we brought to for the night, and took our place with several vessels which, already at anchor, were lazily rolling on the long ocean swell.

The pilot, in a narrow slender canoe with an immense outrigger, now came alongside, rowed by a crew of dusky Cingalese. He had scarcely put his foot on deck before he was fairly mobbed and assailed with such a storm of questions about the war as might have bewildered a clearer head than the poor man seemed to possess. He was a half-cast, and evidently took but little interest in foreign news. Something had been done, but what or where he could not tell. The Black Sea and the Baltic were as one to him, and all the information we could obtain served but to stimulate our curiosity and increase the general excitement. Something had been done, some battle gained, and no doubt it was Sebastopol or Cronstadt that had been bombarded, stormed, blown up, and annihilated. In this belief we danced, hurraed, tossed up our hats, and conducted ourselves in a somewhat extravagant manner.

The pilot remains on board to take the ship in at daylight to-morrow, but his canoe

returning to the shore, I asked and obtained a passage. It was now very dark, and to ship myself in this narrow craft as it rose and sank upon the heavy swell alongside, was a matter of some difficulty. But I was impatient for the land, and none of my companions being disposed to venture, I embarked alone.

As we pushed off into the pitchy darkness, the tall ship, fading from our view, became only distinguishable by the long glistening line of open ports, streaming their light upon the inky sea.

Soon the thunder growled, and the warm rain of the tropics descended in torrents. But there was something so charmingly novel and wild in the whole adventure—here alone among strangers, speaking a strange tongue, and in utter darkness, steering in this strange unstable looking craft over the long rolling billows towards a strange and unknown land—that I felt by far too much delight to heed so trifling a misfortune as a wet skin.

Far before us the distant gleam of the lighthouse, and sullen roar of the surf upon the rocks, alone indicated the direction of the shore, and position of the harbour.

The boatmen, who appeared as indifferent to the rain as myself, chatted together in subdued tones, or marked time to the measured plash of the paddles with a low chant.

Thus in darkness we glided on, now slowly lifted high upon a huge swelling wave—and now gently descending into still blacker night in the deep hollow which succeeded—and guided by the sound of the surf, after an hour's pull we reached the landing-place.

Taking one of the natives for my guide, I instantly set out to seek a lodging in the town. "Lorrett's" appeared to be my conductor's *beau ideal* of an hotel—so for Lorrett's we started. Groping our way along the lengthy wooden jetty, the boatmen almost carrying me in their fear that "sahib" might fall into the water, we soon

reached *terra firma*, and at once found ourselves in a perfect fairyland. Magnificent spreading trees, of beauteous and unknown foliage; grass-grown ramparts, old archways and gates; tall graceful palms, and gorgeous flowers,—all these seen by the glow of lamps which hung among the trees, their light reflected by a thousand glittering rain drops which sparkled upon leaf and spray, formed such a scene of enchantment that I scarcely knew whether I was awake or in a dream.

Following my companion, who led me quickly forward, the rain still falling heavily, we plashed through some narrow streets and shortly approached Lorrett's. Here all seemed as fairy-like as ever. A large, low but handsome building, the numerous open windows and wide portals streaming with light—and the spacious verandahs and corridors gay with exotics and flowering shrubs—presented a beautiful and most inviting appearance.

I entered, and at once secured lodgings

for myself and for my friends, who are to land to-morrow, and having exchanged my dripping vestments for a shirt and a pair of perjamas supplied me by the host, I next proceeded to supper with a keen appetite.

During the meal, I was waited upon by two gentle-looking and half-naked Cingalese, who, with perpetual salaams, strove to anticipate the sahib's every wish. This, to one so lately from that southern land of high wages and scarce servants, was not the least remarkable of this evening's novelties.

Supper ended, it now being late, I desired to go to bed, and was shown into a lofty chamber large enough for a ball-room, in the middle of which stood a bedstead furnished with mattress and pillows, but without bedclothes of any sort.

Thinking this a mistake, I called my dusky attendants, who were puzzled to comprehend what I wanted. I was expected, it appeared, to lie upon the bed in my shirt and perjamas, which are a loose kind of light drawers worn in those sultry climes

whilst sleeping, in lieu of other covering. At my request, however, they brought me a sheet to throw over me, but seemed much amused at my foreign eccentricities.

Mosquitoes were not at all so troublesome as I had been led to anticipate, and, directing that I might be called early, I lay down, and was soon asleep.

Saturday,* 21st. Day had scarcely broken when I was aroused by my barefooted attendant, who, lamp in hand, glided noiselessly to my bedside, to inform me that the steamer was coming in.

Hastily dressing, it was yet scarcely day, when hurrying to the beach, I found that we were rather premature. The steamer still lay at her distant anchorage, though the smoking funnel showed that she was about to move.

As the steamy morning vapours lifted, the rising sun poured his fierce rays through the tree-tops, and lit up a scene as striking and novel, if not quite so dreamy, as the lamplight vision of last night.

Opposite the town, dark groves of the beautiful cocoa-nut palm clothe the margin of the bay down to the very water's edge—a few of these graceful trees even occupying singly some small rocks detached from the shore. The water, even at this early hour, was covered with fishing-canoes, picturesque-looking craft with high stems and sterns, lazily rocking on the undulating sea, whose surface was now unruffled by the slightest breeze; whilst, near the jetty, great crowds of dark, lean, half-naked men were already at their work, wading to and fro, armpit deep, through the mimic surf which rolled upon the beach, and loading with coals, which they carried in bags upon their heads, some large barges which were moored off in deeper water.

The town prettily situated, occupying a low point of land at the left, or western side of the entrance to the bay, and partly concealed behind the grassy old Dutch ramparts, is finely shaded by numerous cocoa palms and beautiful large-leaved

breadfruit trees, which overshadow the streets, and are everywhere intermingled with the houses. Besides the old town within the ramparts, and now the English quarter, there is the native town outside. Many native tradesmen and mechanics, however, are permitted to live within the walls.

It was yet early when the Madras came to anchor in the port, and my friends soon joined me on shore. It became speedily known that the vessel was from the golden lands of Australia, and the native dealers assembled in crowds, offering their wares, consisting of carved ebony trinkets and tortoiseshell.

There was no escape from the importunities of these fellows: they not only invaded the verandahs and sitting-rooms, spite of all the efforts of the domestics, who frequently drove them out with an amusing absence of ceremony, but even followed us into bedrooms, and came in at windows, in their anxiety to find purchasers. They are

awful cheats, too, ask five times as much as they will ultimately take, and impose upon the unwary with all sorts of counterfeits and imperfect articles, patched and plastered up with glue, putty, and black paste. Ebony carved-work must be examined with great care and suspicion. We made some purchases of work-boxes, desks, &c.; and, notwithstanding all our caution, were a good deal taken in.

To-day we obtained more authentic European news than we were able to extract from the pilot last night; and great was our disappointment and chagrin to learn that, instead of Sebastopol or Cronstadt, the destruction of Bomarsund is as yet the only accomplished fact of the War; and that Sir Charles Napier, with this sole achievement to record, is already withdrawing his noble fleet from the Baltic.

We strolled about the streets, ascended the lighthouse, which commands a fine view of the town and harbour, drank the milk from green cocoa-nuts, and idled

through the day very agreeably, though the heat was somewhat steamy and oppressive. We, however, were enabled to supply ourselves with costumes more suited to the climate; and before the day was over, we were all so disguised in Chinese frocks, muslin-covered hats, and other eastern novelties, that, when in our rambles we encountered different groups of our fellow-passengers, we could scarcely recognize each other.

Heavy rain fell at intervals, but after each shower the sun came hotly forth again. The damp and clamminess of everything indoors as well as out, of beds and sofas, mats and walls, are very remarkable even to a northern Australian; but this imparts, even at night, no sensation of chilliness, nor the least apprehension of taking cold.

Our baffled triumvirate of the Madras have again been busy, and have unmis-takeably shown by their proceedings that though at first they professed to be influenced solely by a desire to record their

disapprobation of the arrangements and management of the ship, they are now, in the anger of defeat, willing to gratify their animosity by all or any means.

The Chinaman, Ai Young, in deference to the terrors of the ladies, has, since the events of the 16th, been kept handcuffed, though not otherwise restrained further than that he was forbidden to approach the saloon or after-part of the ship; and the ladies having now landed, this partial restriction would of course cease. Our worthy trio, however, whether in the plenitude of their philanthropy, or under the influence of less amiable motives, I shall not pretend to determine, to-day made application to the chief magistrate here to institute proceedings for the redress of this illused Celestial.

Ai Young was accordingly, in due form, brought before his worship, attended by his deliverers; the legal gentleman, in the fullness of his zeal, conducting the case of the deeply-injured complainant. Great was the

consternation of the confederates, however, when Ai Youg, in answer to questions put to him through the interpreter, declared that he had no complaint to make against anybody—that he liked his captain and officers—that he did not like to be put in handcuffs, or tied up by the tail, but would accuse no one of unjustly treating him; and, finally, that he came before the magistrate only because he was brought by a policeman, and had no other wish than to return to his ship and resume his duties.

Ai Youg was, therefore, dismissed, and returned on board with all despatch; and our friends, looking extremely foolish, were left to explain their position to the magistrate as best they could.

Even after this, one of the party thought it his duty to report to the Company's agent here, that the captain and his chief officer had, contrary to rules and regulations, been together absent from their ship. This complaint was received as it deserved to be; and the allied powers of law, war,

and divinity, now found that in their zeal to annoy they had completely defeated their object; for a large majority of the passengers, who, for reasons before alluded to, had abstained from identifying themselves with any document either for or against, seeing such a determined and dead set made upon one, came forward with true English feeling, and put their names to a letter, expressing sympathy with the captain in the contest, approbation of his general management, and entire approval of the temper and gentlemanly bearing with which he had conducted himself through these last trying scenes.

Finding that we shall have fully a week to wait for the arrival of the steamer from Calcutta, I am glad to avail myself of the opportunity to see a little of the interior of the island, and have made a party with three of the most agreeable of my fellow-passengers to proceed to-morrow to Colombo, seventy-two miles distant; and, to this end, have secured all the seats in the

mail-coach, which is adapted to carry five; the charge is sufficiently high for a *cheap* country—ten pounds for the coach, or fifty shillings for a single seat.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Start for Colombo—Jibbing Hacks—Cocoa-nut Forest
—Useful Purposes of the Cocoa-nut Tree—Ingenious
Warning against Plunderers—The Toddy Drawer—
Paddy Fields and Cinnamon Gardens—Dark-skinned
Belles—Entry into Colombo—A Stroll about the Town
and Bazaars—Ceylon Salmon—Visit to an Elephant
Stable—A Narrow Escape—An Elephant's Tricks—
A Cingalese "Morris-dance"—Booked for Kandy.

SUNDAY, 22nd. Before daybreak we were called by our attendants, who really seem to require little sleep beyond naps and snatches, taken at odd times indifferently during the day or night; and by five o'clock we rattled out of the town with a pair of gray Arabs at such a famous pace, that we flattered ourselves we were going to do the journey in good style. We were soon undeceived, however, when, at the end of five miles, we came to the first change-house, and were furnished with a miserable pair of overworked hacks, who jibbed desperately

at starting, and afterwards required much energy on the part of our dark Portuguese driver, and a large expenditure of whipcord, to keep them going.

We changed every seven miles, but found all the cattle in the same wretched condition, and had invariably the same difficulty and jibbing at the start. Yet the horses are high-bred and well-looking animals, and if a little better fed and less worked, would doubtless perform creditably.

The weather was the same as yesterday, frequent showers, with hot sunshine between-whiles; and the road, though much complained of, and said to be out of repair, we found to be nearly a dead level, and, to the eyes of Australians, in most excellent condition. For a long while after leaving Galle, the road passes beneath the deep shades of a tall cocoa-nut forest, the novel beauty of which charmed us beyond expression. The sea is seen continually with beautiful effect through the taper

columns of these leafy arcades, the heavy surf washing up to the very roots of the trees. Dwellings were numerous by the roadside, nestling in the deep shade; and here and there large boats, drawn high and dry amongst the trees, showed that the occupants of these sequestered retreats sometimes ventured out beyond the angry surf that to-day thundered on the beach.

The cocoa-trees appear to constitute the chief property of the natives in this part of the island; and it is astonishing to how many useful purposes the different parts of this tree are applied. The stem and leaves supply timber for building their houses, and thatch to cover them—besides a drink (toddy), which is obtained by cutting the flower-stem when the tree is about to produce fruit, and suspending beneath the incision an earthen jar, which is emptied and replaced once a day so long as the sap continues to flow. The fruit also supplies drink, food, oil for their household purposes and for sale, together with large quantities

of cordage, which we everywhere saw in process of manufacture in long rope walks, beneath the protecting shade of the same trees which furnish the material. Ten cocoa-nut trees, we were informed, will give a poor man a living; whilst two hundred constitute a property which will enable the owner to keep a carriage, and live in some luxury.

We observed many of the trees that were in bearing encased for some distance above the ground, with three or four of their own huge leaves dried and secured upon the trunk like gigantic sprawling centipedes. This we found, upon inquiry, is a contrivance to prevent plunderers from climbing the trees during the night, which, if attempted, produces a loud crackling amongst these dried leaves, and thus warns the owner.

We also saw a man engaged collecting the toddy. In each plantation a few trees are converted into a sort of ladders, by having quantities of line lashed hoopwise

round their tall stems at short and regular intervals all the way to the top. A slender pole is also laid and secured by lashings along the trunk to hold by. From these ladder-trees long ropes lead to the tops of others that are in bearing, and so on from one to another, thus connecting all the trees that are producing fruit or toddy.

The toddy-drawer, with pots secured to his girdle, and a sharp instrument in his hand resembling a strong hedge-knife, ascends one of the ladder-trees, and running with the agility of a ropedancer along the connecting lines, passes from tree to tree collecting the contents of the little suspended pots into a larger one that he carries, and which, when full, he lowers by a line to an attendant below. With his knife he also slices a fresh piece from the extremity of each bleeding stalk to accelerate the flow of the sap. We tasted the liquor, which in this state is white and frothy like new milk, and has a vapid, mawkish flavour.

As we proceeded towards Colombo, the cocoa-nut trees nearly disappeared, and were replaced by paddy fields and cinnamon gardens. The dwellings also became more numerous, forming at times nearly a continuous street. They are almost entirely constructed of cocoa-wood and leaves, and are very clean and neatly kept. The inmates looked as clean as their houses.

The men are, for the most part, naked above the waist; but the women, besides a sort of petticoat formed of a long piece of muslin passed several times round the loins, and falling below the knees, wear a white cotton jacket of some light fabric, and have a neat and pleasing appearance.

Many we saw to-day of the younger ones were very pretty. Both sexes appear proud of their hair, which is abundant, black, and glossy. The males have soft, pleasing features, but generally a very effeminate expression—so much so, that a stranger will often mistake the young lads for girls at a short distance; and this delusion is much

heightened by the custom among them of wearing a tortoiseshell comb in the hair. This comb is long and narrow, of a curved form, and worn across the crown of the head. The females wear no combs, but the hair simply twisted into a knot at the back of the head is secured by a silver pin; and whether in compliance with present European fashions, or with original eastern custom, I cannot undertake to say, these dark-skinned belles, not content with the luxuriance of their own tresses, generally twist into this topknot a large lock of borrowed hair; so alike, it would seem, are the womankind of every clime and every hue in all these little cunning arts and attractive delusions.

The heads of the children are often kept shaven during their early youth, to strengthen the growth of the hair. We saw great numbers in all the villages to-day, generally naked, but very bright and clean-looking, and with *clean noses*; and they appear the most good-tempered little

creatures in the world, for we neither heard nor saw a single one crying throughout our journey.

Great numbers of people were travelling the road, principally on foot; and many carried heavy loads suspended to either extremity of a slender pole borne across the shoulder. Some, however, rode in tiny carts, but little larger than a wheelbarrow, covered with a neat, light palm-leaf hood or tilt, and drawn by one of the diminutive Cingalese oxen, not bigger than a small donkey.

These trotted along at a famous pace: one or two even had the audacity to attempt a race with her Majesty's mail, and kept so good a place as to occasion an additional application of the whipcord to our lean and wretched steeds. As we approached Colombo, the road was sometimes quite crowded for a mile at a stretch.

Nowwithstanding our early start and numerous relays, and although we had only rested about an hour at Bentotte, the half-

way house where we found a sumptuous luncheon, the sun was getting low when we reached the last change-house. There, however, to our great satisfaction, we were supplied, as at the other end of the line, with a capital pair of horses; and going into Columbo at a slapping pace, we drove to the Royal Hotel, where we found excellent quarters, and soon forgot our fatigues under the reviving influence of a capital dinner.

Monday, 23rd. The excessive damp and clamminess, which at Galle so disagreeably affect everything about one's room, and render one's bed so uncomfortable, do not exist to the same extent here at Colombo, neither is the *dealer* nuisance nearly so intolerable.

We spent the day, which was fine and very warm, strolling about the town and bazaars, where we tasted mangoes, and some other Indian fruits, all of which had more or less a flavour of turpentine, and were, we thought, anything but nice. The

bazaars are well supplied with numerous kinds of vegetables and fruits, and with fish in endless quantity and variety. A large fish called Sere fish, or Ceylon salmon, which we found extremely delicious, is the most esteemed.

We also visited an elephant stable, or shed, and here I was, quite unconsciously, near getting myself into a scrape. A large working elephant was standing in the shed, tied by one hind and one fore foot to strong stakes secured in the ground; and I, not for an instant supposing that an elephant employed in ordinary labour could be dangerous, walked at once up to the brute, and laid my hand upon his long tusk.

The attendant, hastening forward, quickly drew me away, and assured me that I was fortunate to have escaped unhurt, as the elephant having been ill, and tied up without working for some weeks, had become savage, and not at all to be trusted. Yet the creature looked sleepy and quiet, as he stood swaying himself from side to side in

a monotonous lazy kind of way, holding in his trunk a bunch of palm-leaves, with which he brushed off the flies that annoyed him.

Another elephant in the same shed was made to perform various tricks, holding up her foot for the driver to stand upon in mounting to her neck, and lying flat upon the ground at the word of command. But she seemed to obey with reluctance, and grumbled a good deal, often requiring a sharp prick from the iron hook which the man carried in his hand before she would do as commanded. They appear, indeed, uncertain creatures to deal with. One, we were told, had, in a fit of anger, killed its driver a short time before our visit.

Colombo, like Galle, is divided into two parts—the European within the old Dutch walls and fosse, and the native town, with its narrow streets and thronged bazaars outside; but here, unlike Galle, there are no native dwellings within the fort.

In the evening, strolling alone through

the native town, I was attracted by sounds of rude music, and a crowd about the door of a house, which was brilliantly lighted up.

Pushing my way through the throng, I found that some kind of entertainment was going on within. As soon as I was observed, one who appeared to be in authority came forward, and, speaking in English, invited me in, sprinkled me with rose-water from a queer long-necked bottle, brought me in a cup some white liquid wherewith to touch my forehead, and gave me a seat.

The actors were a young boy and girl; and the performance, which continued till midnight, consisted of a sort of morris-dance with sticks, but not involving any great display of skill or activity. The dance was accompanied with songs and music produced from a violin and a Malay drum beaten with the fingers. The airs were rather pleasing, and the novelty of the whole scene rendered it interesting and agreeable.

Two of our party, discouraged by the

toils and fatigues of yesterday, and in fear of missing the steamer, have determined to proceed no further, and return on Wednesday to Galle; but Mr. G——t and myself are resolved to run all risks, and to go on to Kandy, as we can accomplish this—and by travelling in the night-mail hence on Thursday night, reach Galle on Friday morning, before which time there is but a remote chance of the Calcutta steamer coming in. We, therefore, this evening booked places in the Kandy coach for tomorrow, and in the Galle mail for Thursday night.

Tuesday, 24th. This is a country of early hours. We were off by four o'clock; and, as we threaded the narrow streets of the native town in the gray morning light, the people were already astir and coming from their houses. Clearing the city, we passed a noble river by a long bridge of boats, and got fairly away on the splendid Kandy road, as the early sun was chasing the light mists which yet lingered about the

jungles and tree-tops, and clung to the distant mountains. The air was cool and fresh even to chilliness, and the morning altogether delightful, reminding me of an April morn in Australia.

We proceeded at a capital pace: the horses were good, and the road in excellent condition. We passed large gangs of stout hard-working fellows, employed in breaking stones, and keeping the road in repair. These men are all Malabar Indians, immigrants from the mainland, who come over to take the more laborious occupations to which the native Cingalese will not devote themselves; for the same reason, the Malabars are largely employed upon the coffee plantations. Yet the Cingalese regard them as intruders, and so great is the feeling of jealousy and illwill, that instances have occurred of the poor immigrants being destroyed by poison, when journeying towards the interior in search of employment.

Villages and huts were not seen to-day so frequently as upon the Galle road,

though perhaps in no part do you proceed half a mile without finding a dwelling; the cocoa-palms, too, have nearly disappeared, though a few of these indispensable trees are clustered about every habitation. The beautiful bread fruit and jack trees abound; but, in many places, the wild jungle approaches the borders of the road.

We saw many large rice-fields in the lower situations; and, on reaching the hill-country, we observed every little mountain glen commanding a run of water made available for rice cultivation, by cutting and forming the slopes into a succession of level terraces, over which the stream is led, descending from terrace to terrace, and irrigating all in succession. The effect of these bright green flights of giant stairs occupying the deep recesses of the mountains, and hemmed in by dark jungles, is extremely picturesque and striking.

There would appear to be no regular season for growing the rice-crop; for, during the day, we saw in progress all the operations

of rice husbandry, ploughing the land, sowing, green rice-crops in all their different stages, and rice harvesting. In one of the fields where the crop appeared particularly heavy, I gathered an ear and counted the grains upon it. The number was no less than one hundred and seventy-five, and each grain, when planted, produces, we are told, two to three ears; at this rate, rice must be the most prolific of all cereals.

The Indian water buffalo is employed in the ploughing, and is admirably adapted for the purpose, being a dirty brute, delighting in water and mud, in which he will wallow like a pig. The ground, when prepared to receive the seed, is in the condition of liquid mud, and both the cattle and the husbandman, who works quite naked, with the exception of a small waist-cloth, wade knee-deep through the mire, and are bedaubed all over.

Towards noon, we passed a large conspicuous rock, which formerly marked the frontier of the kingdom of Kandy, and soon

after came to the half-way rest-house at the foot of the mountains. The entire distance from Colombo to Kandy is seventy-two miles.

The traffic upon this road is very great. We passed frequent long strings of bullock-drays, in all amounting to many hundreds, conveying coffee down to Colombo, or bringing cocoa-nuts, rice, or merchandize up. These drays, or banties, are all of one uniform construction—long, narrow, and light, with a neat covering, or tilt, of woven cocoa-nut leaves. A single pair of oxen only is attached to each banty; the animals are of two distinct breeds, the little dark brown Cingalese ox, not larger than a weaned calf in Australia, and another kind that the Malabar men bring over, and which are handsome creatures, spotted black and white, with long straight horns lying back to their necks, giving them a striking and wild appearance. These are in size about equal to an Australian yearling steer. Both kinds are sturdy and thickset,

and extremely docile, and willing at their work. The usual banty load is fifteen hundred weight, which appears enormous, considering the size of the oxen.

CHAPTER IX.

Easy, Lazy Labour—Contrast between the Cingalese and the Malays—Pride of the Cingalese—Complaints of High Taxation—Grand Scenery—The Cannucanawa Pass—Column to the memory of Captain Dawson—Arrival at Kandy—The Ceylon Rifles—Prison of the Wives of the Kings of Kandy—Old Palace of the Kings—Courts of Kandean *Justice*—A Buddhist Temple—A Real Tooth of Buddha—Visit to a Coffee Plantation—Wild Coffee—Cost of Cultivating Coffee—Return to Galle—A Talipot Palm in Full Flower—The Oysters of Bentotte—A Run of Seventy-three Miles.

TUESDAY, 25th (continued). In travelling through this fruitful island, there is nothing that strikes one more than the easy, lazy way in which all necessary labour appears to be got through. The natives all look sleek, well fed, and well-conditioned, and there is everywhere a general appearance of plenty, yet no Cingalese is ever seen engaged in any painfully laborious occupation, or in any way distressing himself with toil.

Upon the roads, during the noontide heats, the banties may be seen drawn up in long lines by the wayside, whilst the men and their cattle, all mingled together, repose beneath the shade of thatched palm-sheds constructed for the purpose, the oxen chewing the cud in drowsy contentment, while their dusky masters doze by their sides. Their working hours being from evening till midnight, and from early dawn till towards noon.

Amongst these carriers are many Malabars, who come over to the island bringing their cattle with them. Here also the superior energy and self-denial of these men place them in advantageous contrast with the more indolent and luxurious Cingalese. At the termination of each daily stage, the Malabar drayman leads his oxen to the nearest pool or stream, there waters and carefully washes them, and then returning the animals to their shed, brings them their food consisting of ground grain mixed with water, green paddy or long grass, and not

until he has thus fully provided for the wants of his beasts, does he begin to attend to his own, because, he will say, as his oxen work well, and earn him a good livelihood, he should on his part care well for them.

The Cingalese, on the other hand, though he ultimately provides for his cattle in the same way, first attends to his own refreshment, and will tell you that he bought his oxen to conduce to his own advantage and pleasure, and not to make himself their slave.

These opposite modes of viewing this same subject are, I think, very illustrative of the different characters of the two races.

The Cingalese, notwithstanding their mild features and gentle manners, are, at heart, a proud, haughty people. They regard their island as the fairest spot on earth, and look with jealousy and dislike upon strangers, who come with a view to settle in the country. Especially they dislike to see their lands possessed by

foreigners, and consequently the enmity they bear to the poor Malabars is extended to their employers, the coffee planters.

We have been much struck with the bearing of nearly all the people we have encountered during our journey. Those in the towns who have anything to sell, or otherwise aught to gain by subserviency, can cringe and flatter to an unlimited extent; but the drivers and others whom we have met on the roads, generally regard us with a sullen expression, and show an unwillingness to turn aside, or make way for the coach.

On Sunday, several times when our miserable horses jibbed in some of the wet and soft parts of the road and we stuck fast, though a dozen stout fellows might be looking on, not one would offer to come forward and give us a shove; and even when urged to do so by our driver, they would generally refuse, or comply with marked reluctance, making jeering remarks upon our position, asking what we would pay, or telling the

driver that he might be content to make a living in their country without expecting them to help him to do it.

Yet these people, as far as I could inform myself upon the subject, do not appear to desire emancipation from British rule and protection. They acknowledge that they now enjoy freedom from former oppressions, and are justly governed, but complain that they are too highly taxed, and are liable to some imposts to which British subjects at home are not subjected, and this is a great affront to their dignity.

They yet remember, too, with bitterness, the unfortunate events of 1848, for which Lord Torrington and his government will not be soon forgotten, or forgiven.

Having rested an hour, and lunched at the half-way house, we again resumed our way, and soon began to ascend the mountains. At the foot of each long hill, a third horse, ready harnessed, awaited us, and thus we proceeded easily and without delays.

As we progressed, the scenery became

sublimely grand—the road, which is cut in traverses up the steep mountain sides, presenting, at each turn, some new and enchanting prospect. Far and near upon the steep slopes and summits of the highest mountains, could be descried the coffee plantations in irregular patches, their bright yellowish-green tints in marked contrast with the sombre hues of the surrounding hill-jungles, which here in general appearance bear a very close resemblance to an Australian mountain-brush.

Deep below us, we looked down upon the long winding valley by which the ancient elephant road from Colombo to Kandy ascended towards the mountain passes; whilst, above and afar, perched upon the most inaccessible-looking heights, the large buildings of the coffee plantations made a very picturesque appearance, and greatly added to the striking effect of this wild and remarkable scenery.

The fine modern road has not only altogether superseded the old one, but, by

rendering practicable the use of bullock-banties, has so far done away with the employment of elephants in this part of the island that we have not seen one of these creatures at work throughout the whole of our journey from Galle.

The road still ascending, the scenery became at every step more wild and savage till we reached the culminating point at the Cannucanawa Pass, where the track crosses the main range, or watershed, dividing the streams flowing westward towards Colombo from those going east to Trincomalee. Here, on the very summit of the pass, stands a fine column erected to the memory of Captain Dawson, the engineer who constructed this splendid road, and who died at Colombo in 1829.

From the pass, the descent is but slight towards Kandy, ten miles distant. Everything told that we had now entered a new and highland region—the air felt lighter, cocoa-nut trees were no longer to be seen, and the appearance of the vegetation gene-

rally was less rampant and tropical. The weather which, though bright and fine, had not been oppressively hot all day, had become delightfully cool, as at four o'clock we drove into Kandy, and found excellent quarters at Staunton's hotel. The horses have been capital throughout, and the drive altogether most agreeable.

Attracted by the sounds of music, we again sallied forth whilst dinner was preparing, and found a military band performing in an open grassy space beside the famous lake. The musicians were all black or brown, and belonged to a detachment of the Ceylon Rifles stationed here.

There is altogether a very considerable military force maintained on the island—two full British regiments, besides a corps 1,400 strong of the so-called Ceylon Rifles, which does not, however, as I believe, possess within its ranks a single native of the Cingalese race.

The force is composed of Malabars, Kaffres, and Malays: these last are fierce-

looking men, and experience has proved that neither military discipline nor the being associated with comrades of other blood can in any degree diminish their natural ferocity.

During the unhappy disturbances of 1848, these fellows, it is said, were the cause of much unnecessary bloodshed. When once loosed, they could not be restrained; and, on some occasions, when parties of the so-called rebels dispersed at the first menace of opposition, these tigers in human shape, slipping from their ranks, darted after the fugitives into the jungle, and there destroyed their unresisting and generally unarmed victims with the murderous creese which, though forming no part of their regimental equipment, they manage to carry concealed upon their persons.

Wednesday, 25th. Kandy is beautifully situated in the midst of an amphitheatre of fine hills. Beside the town, a small valley, artificially dammed across, forms the famous Kandean lake, in the centre of which, upon

a little artificial island, is seen the building formerly the prison, and often the place of execution, of the luckless wives of the kings of Kandy, when so unfortunate as to fall into disfavour. The deep waters of the lake in those days held many secrets, and covered many sorrows, perhaps sins as well.

The women of Kandy are very good-looking, and have lighter complexions than those of the low country; the men are slight, sinewy, and tall, and appear even more proud than their lowland brethren.

The hills round the city are like those at Cannucanawa Pass, dotted with coffee plantations, but otherwise covered with jungle.

The old palace of the kings is a substantial range of building, without much claim to architectural beauty. It is, however, finely situated in a garden facing the lake, with a high ridge immediately at the rear, and a deep fosse in front: the latter is being filled up, and the building is con-

verted into quarters for some of the government officials.

The old court, where the kings dispensed Kandean *justice*, is now used as a police-office, and it is to be hoped better deserves the title of a court of justice than formerly.

Near the lake is a fine old Buddhist temple, and some ancient tombs of the kings. The walls of the temple are elaborately ornamented with carved work, and with paintings, somewhat uncouth in their execution, representing human beings under torture. Some of the torments are horribly conceived, and indicate a great degree of genius for this kind of science in the artist.

One of the delineations most in vogue is that of a man prostrate upon his back—his mouth held open by two others with huge blacksmith's tongs, whilst a fourth pours molten lead down his throat from an enormous ladle.

In the inner sanctum of the temple are kept some valuable jewels, and a *real* tooth of Buddha; but, as the functionary who

keeps the key was absent, though we went twice we could not gain admittance.

The Perhadinia public gardens, about four miles from the town, we also found worth a visit. Heavy rain coming on in the afternoon prevented our seeing all we wished to see; but we were enabled to visit a coffee plantation, and obtain much information as to the culture and management.

Coffee, of the best quality, is produced, it appears, in the highest situations; therefore, mountain plantations are preferred, and the higher up the better, provided a sufficient supply of water can be obtained to work the pulping mill, and for general purposes. Where the land is very steep the surface is not worked, but square holes only are dug to receive the seeds in rows four or five feet asunder. This is a necessary precaution to prevent the whole surface from being carried away by the heavy rains, which would be the case were it turned up or disturbed.

Much of the land upon the hills is covered

with wild coffee, as it is called, that is with old plantations, which, having been badly managed, and the ground never dressed, have ceased to yield a sufficient crop to be worked at a profit. Such lands may be had very cheap, but the labour and cost of bringing them into order are very great; and they are not so good after all, though much may be done by the aid of manure. New lands are, therefore, generally preferred, notwithstanding the expense of clearing the jungle.

The upset price of such land is twenty shillings per acre, and the average selling price about £3, though it sometimes goes as high as £10. The cost of clearing and planting the land is put at £7, making a total expense of £10 the acre on an average estate. To this is to be added only a few shillings to cover charges for weeding and hoeing during the first and second years, when the plants begin to bear, and will produce something like three hundred weight per acre—the third year a full crop of seven

hundred weight may be expected, which at £1 10s. per hundred weight clears off the entire outlay; and thereafter a yearly revenue of some £8 or £9 per acre may be calculated on, subject only to deductions for the expense of constructing permanent buildings and machinery for pulping, cleaning, and drying the coffee-berries; but as from £2,000 to £3,000 are considered sufficient for these purposes upon an estate of from four to five hundred acres, there would still, it appears, remain such an amount of clear profit as to render a coffee estate in Ceylon, if these figures are to be relied upon, one of the most desirable investments to be met with. Certain it is, that the coffee planters boast of very great success during the last few years, and seem to be all prosperous, and in easy circumstances.

The coffee plant, when allowed to grow wild, attains a height of ten or twelve feet; but, in its cultivated state, is pruned and kept down to four or five. The leaves are

glossy, and of a bright green hue, and with its profusion of scarlet and purple berries, the shrub at this season make a very beautiful appearance.

With the vaunted cinnamon gardens of Colombo, on the contrary, I was much disappointed, and could indeed see nothing to admire in them. The trees, annually cut to the ground, send out from the stumps, like basket-willows, a mass of straggling shoots, eight or ten feet in height; they are not planted with any order or regularity, nor is the ground always kept free from grass and weeds. A cinnamon garden, in fact, has much the appearance of brush-land in process of clearing, with the trees gone and the low scrub remaining. The leaf of the cinnamon much resembles that of the coffee bush: in colour and glossiness it is like a laurel-leaf, but longer and of a lighter tint.

Our holiday is now over. We must set off in the morning, and travel without stopping back to Galle, as the agent warned us, before starting, that we could not safely remain absent beyond to-morrow.

Thursday, 26th. The coach called for us at five o'clock; the morning was quite sharp and bracing, and soon gaining the Cannucanawa Pass, we rapidly descended the hills towards Colombo, retracing our route of the day before yesterday.

When coming up, we had seen, not far from the half-way house, one of the rare and magnificent talipot palms, in full flower. The tree is said to blossom only once in a hundred years, and so fine a specimen as that which we saw is regarded even here as a wonder.

My companion commissioned one of the attendants to get him a piece of the flower against our return, and promised to give a rupee for it. On reaching the house to-day our first inquiry was for the talipot flower; but we were disappointed—the man had been, he said, to ask for a piece, as desired, but the owner of the tree had replied to the effect that the first of the flower was a sacrifice to his gods, which he would not sell for twenty rupees, but

that, in a few days, his offering would be made, after which we might take the whole flower and welcome.

The weather changed, and became showery about noon, and it was raining hard when we reached Colombo at four o'clock, and returned to our old quarters at the hospitable and spacious Royal Hotel. Here we had three hours allowed for rest, the Galle coach not starting till seven. The rain continued, and was still falling heavily when, at half-past seven, we bade a reluctant adieu to Colombo, and again set forth.

My companion contrived to miss the coach, and was left behind; but we had not got far on the road when I was well pleased to see him come galloping up in a cab.

But more troubles were in store for us. The relays of horses, bad as we had found them on our way up, were all worse now—for this late coach being an extra affair, carrying the mails to meet the Calcutta

steamer, was horsed with the animals which had already done their work during the afternoon, and the poor jaded brutes appeared determined to resist the imposition to the utmost. At every stage, they kicked, jibbed, and refused to start, and were got off with great difficulty and delay, a dozen men pushing at the wheels and hauling at the traces. Two men ran constantly beside the horses to assist the driver in urging them along, and to keep them on the road, for the wretched animals occasionally in their desperation endeavoured to get into the ditch, or anywhere rather than go ahead.

Such an amount of flogging and thrashing, as it was painful to feel oneself accessory to, often failed, however, to keep us in motion, notwithstanding the exertions of the runners, who tugged at the traces, and worked with surprising energy and endurance. We frequently stuck fast, and had to descend in rain and mire, and walk forward till the tormented horses could be prevailed upon

to bring the empty carriage up to us again. Thus the night dragged miserably on; and, instead of reaching Galle by daylight, as we had been flatteringly led to expect, it was four o'clock when we came to Bentotte, the half-way house, where we were heartily glad to rest for an hour, and get an early breakfast. Among the dishes served to us were some remarkably nice fried oysters, of which I ate; but, in the sequel, found such cause to repent having done so, that I would advise all future travellers not to be tempted by the oysters of Bentotte.

It was light, when we again proceeded. The rain had ceased, and the sun, as the morning advanced, became excessively hot. Matters went on a little better than they had done during the night, but it was near mid-day when, thoroughly tired and weary, we at length reached Galle, and our troubles ceased.

One of our runners came all the way through without being changed. The fellow, who is a light, active, and handsome young

man, of Portuguese descent, did not even appear fatigued, though he was all the way, when not running, quite as actively engaged pulling a trace or dragging at the horses' heads, and he only occasionally obtained a little rest by standing on the carriage step. The distance is seventy-three miles.

On rejoining our friends at Galle, we found them anxiously looking for us, and in some alarm, as the expected steamer (the Bengal) has come in this morning, and is only awaiting the arrival of the China mail, now over-due; on receiving which the captain says he shall sail in two hours. However, no China mail made its appearance during the afternoon, and we were not sorry to be able to remain quiet.

In the evening I was suddenly and violently seized with an attack so very like cholera in its symptoms, that I became somewhat alarmed. I sent for a doctor, who was a native, of Portuguese blood I believe, but as dark as a Cingalese, and was recommended by our host as skilful in

cholera complaints. Having ascertained that I came from Colombo, the doctor's first question was—" *Had I eaten oysters at Bentotte?*" My answer in the affirmative seemed to relieve the worthy medico of all grave apprehension; and ordering me some simple remedies, he told me I had nothing to fear; and he was right, for soon after his departure I got rid of my pains and fell asleep.

Saturday, 28th. I awoke this morning free from my complaint, but a good deal weakened and shaken by the violence of the attack. The China mail has not yet come in, and the Bengal still waits; but the threat of sudden departure is kept *in terrorem* over us, and prevents our undertaking any excursion which would carry us out of sight of the harbour. Thus the day was provokingly wasted and frittered away, though there are temples and many other objects of interest which we would gladly have visited in the neighbourhood; and, when the China steamer did at

length come in this evening, it was found that she has so much freight in dollars and silks to be transhipped into the Bengal, that the latter cannot get away before to-morrow morning.

This evening we all went up to the agent's office to receive our *board money*, which the Company very liberally allows to all their passengers whilst detained on shore awaiting the steamer. We were paid four rupees for each day since our landing, and were warned to be on board to-morrow morning by seven o'clock.

Had arrangements permitted, I would gladly have remained a fortnight longer in this delightful island, and have proceeded by the next steamer, for never in my life have I spent a week more agreeably than the last; but my friends, who suffer from the excessive humidity of the climate, are anxious to proceed. The weather continues very showery and wet, with the wind still at south-west, though it is now past the season at which the opposite, or

north-east monsoon usually sets in, bringing drier weather and clearer skies. However, but for the extreme moisture of the atmosphere, which at Galle exceeds anything that could be imagined, but which at Kandy, or even Colombo, is much less felt, the climate, as we have found it, is by no means unpleasant; the heat in the daytime is not excessive, the thermometer seldom rising above 80° to 84° , but the nights are comparatively much warmer, two or three degrees being the extent of the variation between noon and midnight.

CHAPTER X.

Farewell to Ceylon—Extortion of Native Boatmen—Run-away Cingalese—The Bengal—Prospect of an Agreeable Passage—Ills of Shipboard Existence—Oppressiveness of the Heat—The Indian Passengers—A Sea without a Ripple—Yellow Coasts of Socotra—Rocky Islands of Abd al Curia—Eastern Extremity of Africa—The Gulf of Aden—Burial at Sea—The Arab Coast Sighted—Arrival at Aden—Nigger Boatmen—Clamour and Confusion—The Work of Coaling.

SUNDAY, 29th. We were all on board betimes this morning; but when seven o'clock came, barges piled with bales of silks and boxes of treasures were yet discharging their precious freights into the Bengal. More barges similarly laden were coming, and yet others were still alongside the inexhaustible China steamer, receiving more bales and more boxes. The Admiralty agent in charge of the mails fretted and fumed, complained to the captain of the

delay, and urged an immediate departure, without reference to the China steamer, her treasures, or silks.

The captain grumbled, fidgetted, and threatened compliance with the Admiralty agent's suggestion, if this inordinate transshipment should not soon come to an end. The last barge, however, did at length make its appearance: the anchor was speedily hove up, and at ten o'clock, under a cloudless but hazy sky and broiling sun, we steamed out of the bay, and reluctantly bid farewell to fruitful, luxurious, pleasant Ceylon, with all its beauteous cocoa groves, magnificent scenery, gentle manners, and handsome, interesting people.

Galle is the least agreeable of the cities of Ceylon, both on account of its more humid climate and its comparative dearth; and a voyager who has some days to remain in the island, should not fail to visit Colombo. Intercourse with the numerous passengers from the gold-fields of Australia, who often spend their money as

though to divest themselves of their wealth with the same rapidity with which it has been acquired were their principal object, has, it is said, much influenced all prices and charges at Point de Galle: certainly, the native boatmen there make demands which would not discredit Melbourne itself. I paid four and a half rupees (nine shillings) this morning for the transport of myself and baggage, consisting only of a portmanteau, a basket, and carpet bag, from my hotel to the ship, a distance of about half a mile, the fellows grumbling at the amount, and demanding nearly double.

Several of our passengers have engaged as servants young Cingalese lads, and brought them on board. They are good-looking, merry little fellows, and appear very obedient and docile. They seem highly delighted at having provided themselves with places, and at their prospect of seeing the world. One little scamp, who came hurrying on board only just as the ship got under weigh, confessed that he had

bolted from an employer, and had with difficulty got away.

Very many boys offered themselves whilst we were at Galle. I would have taken one or two had I been going to, instead of leaving, Australia.

The Bengal is a noble ship of two thousand two hundred tons burthen, and three hundred and thirty feet in length, but is rather slow under steam, her engines of only four hundred and seventy horse power not being in proportion to her immense size. Though we have a smooth sea, and fore and aft sails set, the wind being a little before the beam, we do not make above nine knots.

Few passengers pass from the East to Europe at this season of the year; and, as many of those who came from Australia in the Madras went on to India or Singapore, we have not above sixty on board the Bengal, though she has ample accommodation for more than double the number. Thus we have abundance of room, can

keep all our baggage in our cabins, instead of getting it up from the hold twice a week as in the Madras; and altogether there is every prospect of an agreeable passage.

Monday, 30th. We are now fairly on the open ocean again, clear of the coast of Ceylon, and standing away to the westward, direct for the Gulf of Aden. The sea continues smooth, but the lingering breezes of the south-west monsoon are rather against us, and we do not make rapid progress. Distance run to-day only one hundred and ninety-six miles. Many showers fell during the day, and the weather is dark and almost chilly.

Wednesday, November 1st. A slight return of the attack I suffered from at Galle, combined with the ordinary ills of shipboard existence, has completely laid me up to-day, and brought me under the hands of the doctor.

The last breath of wind has died away, and the sea is dead calm. Pace improving—we ran two hundred and fifteen miles.

Thursday, 2nd. A light breeze from the north-east gives us hope that the monsoon is at length setting in. I still continue unwell, and in the doctor's care. Distance at noon two hundred and twenty-three miles.

Friday, 3rd. Nothing particular to note. The puff of wind yesterday died away again without bringing the desired monsoon. I am still unwell and confined to my berth. Distance run two hundred and twenty-four miles.

Saturday, 4th. Got upon my legs again to-day—thanks to the doctor's skill and attentive care—but feel excessively weak and languid, and find the heat oppressive, though the mercury does not rise above 81° to 82° , but to those figures it keeps very steadily, not sinking more than two or three degrees during the night; and if it were not that the fine weather enables us to sleep with all ports wide open, the cabin berths would be distressingly hot.

We are beginning to make acquaintance with the Indian passengers, many of whom are most agreeable people. A very pretty, little dark-eyed lady from Bombay, accompanying her husband, who is going to England on sick-leave, is much admired, and is a general favourite. The warm, still evenings we spend pleasantly, sitting to chat in the calm moonlight, or promenading the spacious decks.

Our kind-hearted and attentive captain is all anxiety for the comfort and contentment of his passengers; and, as for Mr. W——r, our purser, his arrangements are inimitable, and his attentions unremitting: he is the prince of pursers, and a very gentleman-like and agreeable companion to boot. Altogether, we are extremely fortunate in our ship, officers, and fellow-passengers; and, if it be possible to find pleasure in a sea voyage, it may certainly be expected in the present instance.

We ran to-day two hundred and forty miles.

Sunday, 5th. So calm a sea as we have now around us is, I imagine, rarely seen: not only is it without a ripple to disturb its glassy surface, but the dead and utterly motionless level is unbroken by the smallest swell or undulation.

We have already nearly passed the wide expanse of the Indian Ocean, and are in great spirits at the near prospect of the call at Aden, and passage through the straits of Bab-el-mandeb into the mysterious and interesting Red Sea.

During the afternoon, the yellow coasts of Socatra were in sight to the northward, showing smoky and indistinct through the hot blue haze; and, in the early part of the night, we passed close under the little islands of Abd al Curia, fine masses of bare rock rising almost perpendicularly from the sea, the larger to the height of two thousand feet. Running under them as we did, nearly within gunshot, they presented, in the bright moonlight, a very grand and striking appearance.

Our run to-day of two hundred and fifty miles, is the longest we have yet made since leaving Ceylon, and equals the best performances of the Madras.

Monday, 6th. The bold cliffs of Cape Gardefan, or Gardefui, the easternmost extremity of burning Africa, were in sight this morning on our port bow, and the high rocky coast exhibiting an appearance of scorched sterility and fiery heat, such as it would be difficult adequately to describe, continued indistinctly visible through the hot murky atmosphere all the forenoon, as we advanced up the Gulf of Aden over a sea so glassy, dead, and sluggish, that, as it slumbered beneath the sun's fierce rays, it looked less like water than like molten lead.

The heat to-day, although the thermometer still marks no higher than 81° , is very oppressive; and, though fully ten to fifteen degrees below the ordinary summer mid-day heat of Australia, produces a feeling of languor and helplessness such as is there

never experienced; but, as I have before mentioned, the nights, since we entered the northern hemisphere, are nearly as warm as the days, and the sun here shines with almost noontide fervour as soon as he rises.

Day's run, two hundred and thirty-one miles. At noon Aden was but three hundred and forty-eight miles distant.

This evening we witnessed a melancholy but interesting ceremony. A poor fellow, a seaman, in this Company's service, whom we took on board invalided at Galle for a passage to England, his native country, died during the night, and was, at eight o'clock this evening, committed to the deep. Most of the passengers, and all the British part of the crew attended in their best attire. Many of the Lascars also looked on with an expression of sad interest upon their intelligent, dusky countenances.

Four quarter-masters, in their neat seaman's holiday costume, stood by the bier, a grating covered with the union-jack. All heads were uncovered, the captain reading

the service for the burial of the dead. At the words, we "commit this our brother to the deep," the bier was raised, the corpse launched from the lofty ship's side, and a moment afterwards, a slight splash announced that the calm moonlit sea had closed for ever over the mortal remains of this poor wanderer, far away from home and friends. The scene was affecting, and the decorum and grave sadness of all present solemn and impressive.

Tuesday, 7th. Sighted the Arab coast about noon; and, towards evening, the bold promontory of Aden began to rise, island-like, from the distant wave before us, showing higher and bolder as we advanced, till towards nine o'clock, when coming close under this magnificent mass of rocks towering to a height of nine hundred feet, and now showing their jagged and pointed outlines in dark relief against the clear starlit sky, we sent up a rocket, and fired a gun as a signal for a pilot.

The thundering echoes which followed

our cannon's report had scarcely died away among the rocks when, up on the highest pinnacle of the mountain, blazed forth an answering blue light, illuminating with its powerful glare the neighbouring peaks and crags, as we now proceeded slowly towards the harbour. The effect of the whole scene was enchanting beyond expression. A boat soon approached, and the first person who came on board brought us the exciting intelligence of the splendid victory of the Alma.

We shortly entered the harbour, which is very easy of access, and no sooner was the anchor down, than a swarm of boats came alongside, seeking passengers for the shore, and their dark, woolly-headed rowers would have taken the ship by storm, but, in anticipation of this attack, a quartermaster was stationed upon the ladder; and, cane in hand, vigorously repelled every assault. The niggers, thus defeated, fell to wrangling among themselves in their whiney querulous tongue, and the clamour and confusion were unbounded.

The moon had lately risen, and was streaming through the clear, dry air such a flood of light as rendered all objects in the harbour, and even the few houses on shore, plainly visible.

Slowly approaching the ship in tow of numerous boats, were now seen huge barges high piled with monster heaps of coal, and crowned with swarms of chattering Sedeboys, as the Africans from the opposite shore of the gulf are here denominated. Presently, the first barge came alongside—the Sedeboys, with loud yells, rushed on board: the work of coaling began in earnest, and our clean, well-ordered, and quiet ship was soon converted into a perfect pandemonium.

The thundering clatter of the coals in their descent through the iron tubes, or shafts, leading from the deck to the bunks below, the clouds of grimy dust which soon pervaded every part of the vessel, and the songs, shouts, and screams of the Sedeboys, as they warmed at their work, produced

altogether such a complication of horrors as rendered the prospect for the night on board almost unendurable, but accounts from the shore were discouraging, and at a late hour, we reluctantly went below, and turned in to await the morning's light.

The distance of Aden from Point de Galle, is two thousand two hundred and fifty miles.

CHAPTER XI.

Negro Choruses—A Terrible Night—A Scene on the Beach—An Arab Charger—Aden: its Barren and Black Desolation—The Fortifications—Diminutive Donkeys—Strange Site of the Town, &c.—The Hotels and their Fare—Parsee Innkeepers—Arab Beauty Disfigured—Camels at Rest—The Hostile Arabs—Their Fanatical Hatred—The Garrison—Fearful Summer Heat—Traffic in Skins of Wild Beasts—Novel Horse Racing—On Board once More—A Shoal of Black Divers—Aden left Behind.

WEDNESDAY, 8th. My cabin being well aft, I suffered less than I had expected, and was able to snatch some broken slumbers between the intervals of the negroes' more frantic choruses; but those whose berths were nearer the scene of action and the noisy coal shoots, had a terrible night of it, and, when morning came, presented a very exhausted and used-up appearance.

With the first light we went on deck, and found shore-boats already alongside. No

sooner did we appear on the gangway than a sharp contest began among the dusky boatmen for the honour, or profit, of conveying us ashore; but at length a boat having been successfully forced up to the ladder, we jumped in, four of us in all, and the conquerors quickly pushed out of the throng, setting up a song of triumph at their victory.

Early as was the hour, a crowd of men and boys mounted on horses and donkeys of every size and colour awaited us on the beach, and the moment we set foot on shore they charged upon us, and nearly rode over us in their anxiety to force their steeds upon our notice—and the cries of “good horse, sir; you try dis horse, sir; see dis donkey, sir; fine donkey, sir; look him knee, sir; nebber been down, sir,” soon became perfectly bewildering.

To gain a little space as well as to enable us to make a choice, we desired our woolly-headed and bare-legged persecutors to give us a sample of their boasted ani-

mals' paces. With a yell they darted off, galloped in short circles about the small ashy plain which at this point separates the beach from the rocky heights, and quickly returned more clamorous and importunate than ever.

In the meanwhile, I had got my eye upon a likely-looking gray Arab among the throng, and now for the large sum of two rupees made him mine for the morning. My companions also suited themselves, and delighted to be once more in the saddle, though rather tattered and disreputable samples of the pig-skin they were, we galloped off on the road to the cantonment, about four miles from the port.

By daylight, the singularly barren and black desolation of Aden more than realized the appearances of last night. The whole promontory is one vast lofty pile of dark volcanic rock, scoria, and ashes, and resembles a huge heap of coke and cinders but just burnt out, so fresh and recent seem the traces of heat and fire. Not a sign of

vegetation appears upon the scorched and arid steeps which, in frowning nakedness, tower one over the other from the water's edge to the summit.

This remarkable promontory is connected with the low mainland by a narrow neck of sand only, the approaches from which are strongly fortified, and the heights are everywhere crossed by walls and crowned by batteries, giving to the whole place an appearance of formidable strength.

Exhilarated by the novelty of the scene, and the fresh morning air, we galloped on along the well-made road which skirts the sea, and passing strings of diminutive donkeys carrying water, contained in goat-skins, to supply the small settlement at the port, and grave stately camels conducted by proud-looking Arabs, and bearing enormous loads of dry firewood, we came to a deep cutting in the adamantine rock, well fortified and guarded.

Passing through this, we entered a sort of basin, or amphitheatre, quite enclosed by

the bare dismal rocks, save where a narrow gap at the further side opens to the sea. The bottom of this crater-like basin is a small plain containing several springs and wells of fresh water, and over the stony surface of which are scattered the buildings of the cantonment, the officers' quarters, the barracks, the bazaar, and the native town, if so can be termed a huddled group of huts, constructed of reeds and bulrushes, and inhabited chiefly by Africans from the opposite coast.

There are also two or three hotels, rather spacious buildings, not exactly houses, yet something better than sheds. At one of these, in company with twenty or thirty of our fellow-passengers, who had by this time found their way out, we took a scrambling breakfast despite the determined opposition of countless legions of flies. The fare consisted of sere fish, execrable mutton, small but very nice eggs, coffee, coarse bread, and delicious bananas from the mainland.

The innkeepers are Parsees from Bom-

bay, and the bazaar people are also chiefly natives of India, who sell Bombay produce, rice, dhol, &c. ; the mechanics and artisans, too, come from the same quarter.

A few Arabs dwell within the cantonment: we saw some girls of this race who were well formed, and very far from bad looking, though sadly disfigured by their elaborate and profuse attempts at ornament and decoration.

Not content with rings on their fingers and toes, and perfect hoops in their ears and noses, with heavy silver chains and richly-worked collars upon their necks, and with bracelets and anklets on their arms and legs, they also bedaub themselves with paint, staining the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, and sometimes even the cheeks, of a deep saffron or orange colour, and the tips of the toes and fingers dark purple or black. They also apply the latter dye to the under-eyelid, where, however, it produces rather a pleasing effect, increasing the lustrous appearance of the eye.

Great numbers of camels were lying about the cantonment, and appeared to have been recently unburdened. They are brought in by the Arabs loaded with the produce of the interior—firewood, canes and reeds for building and thatching, dates, bananas, poultry, &c.; and the gaunt, misshapen creatures were now crouched upon the hard, stony ground, lying at rest in the most uncomfortable-looking postures, and with grotesque gravity, chewing the cud with their great mouths and long flabby lips.

A few oxen which were standing about, though coarse and humpy, were handsome animals—large, powerful, and heavy.

The Arabs, generally, are still hostile; and, unreconciled to the occupation of this portion of their territory by our unbelieving race, they are treated with much suspicion, no Arab being allowed to come armed within the gates. Even a stick must be laid aside, and the garrison do not venture far outside the walls. Occasional proofs are not wanting to show that all this

precaution is necessary. Not very long since, a large Arab force assembled in the neighbourhood, and was only deterred from making an attack by the formidable appearance of the defences, and the state of preparation in which the place was found.

The extent of their fanatical hatred was proved on a recent occasion when a young officer of the garrison having, incautiously, strolled a short distance outside the works, was attacked by a single Arab, who however, after a desperate struggle, lost his own life in the attempt to take that of his intended victim; the Englishman thus with difficulty saving himself by his superior strength and prowess.

The garrison consists of two full regiments of Madras and Bombay Native Infantry; a detachment of Artillery, and a company of Sappers and Miners.

A good many young trees have been planted about the cantonment; and, shaded and protected in cane-work casings, appear

to be making a successful struggle for existence.

We were warned to beware of the sun's noontide rays; and accordingly, soon after breakfast, set out again for the port. We found the heat very great in returning, with a dryness of atmosphere and intense glare that could vie with the fiercest summer weather in the hottest parts of Australia. Judging by the present temperature, the summer-heat here must be something fearful, yet Aden is said to be not unhealthy.

Having some hours to dispose of before returning to the ship, where the dusty operation of coaling was yet going forward as actively as ever, we took refuge beneath the shade of the spacious verandahs and open, airy chambers of a large Parsee inn, which standing near the beach enabled us to watch for the hoisting of blue peter on board, and to enjoy the cool sea-breeze now setting in.

This hotel is not badly supplied with wines, bottled beer, and other drinkables,

as well as solids, and in the large principal room are ranged around the walls, barrack-fashion, a great array of beds, where, had we known it, we might have found ample refuge from the noisy discomforts of last night.

We now passed the time trafficking for the dried skins of wild beasts, lions, panthers, hyenas, &c., and for boas and ladies' muffs fabricated of ostrich-feathers, which appeared to be the only articles the place affords worth carrying away.

Some of the party amused themselves by setting the Sedeboy horsemen to ride races for small pieces of money, and novel were the ideas of horseracing possessed by these screeching, laughing, woolly-headed jockeys.

The course was along the road about a quarter of a mile, round a sharp corner and back again by the beach; often on reaching the turn those who had got the lead would pull up and wait to start all fair again, whilst others, who were furthest behind,

would dash clean across the corner, cut into the course in advance of the leading horses, and coming first to the winning-post, unhesitatingly demand the prize. Nor could it be hammered into their thick heads that this was not all right and fair; and, when made to start afresh, they evidently regarded the objection as a mere subterfuge and imposition, and the race was run again just as before. Our only resource was to award the prize to the horse that fairly *would have* been the winner, and this I observed was often my gray nag of the morning.

At three o'clock, signal was made for all to get on board. We found the ship surrounded by a perfect shoal of blackies, young men and boys, who had swam out from the shore, and were engaged in diving after small coins, which the passengers on deck amused themselves by casting into the water to be thus scrambled for. The untiring way in which these fellows continued swimming and diving, and the depth

to which they sometimes followed the pieces of money were quite surprising.

By five o'clock we were once more fairly under weigh, and leaving Aden behind with a fine wind and all sail set.

CHAPTER XII.

Strait of Bab-el-mandeb—Happy Results of Bottled Beer—
Hottest Part of the Red Sea—Fearful Stories about the
Heat—High Temperature of the Sea—Splendid Run—
A Southerly Breeze—Effect of the Water on the Engines
—Prayers on the Quarter Deck—Testimonial to the
Captain and Officers of the Bengal—Lottery for the
Desert Transit—The Straits of Jubal—Gulf of Suez—
A Change in the Temperature.

THURSDAY, 9th. Made such good progress that we passed through the strait of *Bab-el-mandeb*, or gate of tears, one hundred and forty miles from Aden, by three o'clock this morning; we managed, however, to wake in time and went on deck, and the moon shining very brightly enabled us to get a pretty good view of this famous strait.

We passed by the narrow passage, not more than a mile and a half in width, between the Arabian shore and the island of Perim, lying in the midst of the strait. Upon this lonely, deserted island is a

monument erected to the memory of our unfortunate countrymen who here landed, under the command of Sir David Baird, during Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, and ingloriously died, falling victims to the deadly climate.

During the day, we sighted several small islands, some of them very high—all perfectly barren, and in appearance as arid, scorched, and blasted as the promontory of Aden.

The heat is rather oppressive, though not very great, 86° being the highest range of the thermometer in the shade, which we should not think much of in Australia; but the nights are warm, and the effects very debilitating. I have taken to bottled beer at lunch, with happy results.

At noon, we were two hundred and two miles from Aden, and in lat. $14^{\circ} 13'$ north.

Friday, 10th. We are now in the hottest part of the dreaded Red Sea, but don't find much to complain of. The officers relate fearful stories of ladies fainting from the

heat, and even falling dead upon the deck on former occasions; but nobody now seems disposed to become the subject of a new tragical anecdote of this kind. It is true the summer is passed, and we are told the weather is unusually cool and favourable even for this late season of the year.

The mercury to-day rose to 88°, but the air being dry, the heat is less disagreeable than when a few degrees lower nearer the equator; but so high is the temperature of the sea hereabouts that my early bath, though the water is always fresh pumped in, has been rather a tepid than a cold bath for some mornings past, and scarcely at all refreshing.

All sail is crowded to-day, including studding-sails, port and starboard, fore and aft, both above and below, and we are running before a fresh breeze which, though from the southward, tends to keep down the heat. With its assistance we made a splendid run of two hundred and sixty miles, and at noon were in lat. 17° 42',

long. $40^{\circ} 16'$ east. No land has been in sight all day.

Saturday, 11th. Still running before the southerly breeze, which has become lighter, and it is feared we are about to lose it: so fair and so steady has the wind been for the last three days that with all sail set, and the yards squared, scarcely a rope has been touched throughout the whole time even to pull upon a brace.

We had the thermometer up to 90° this afternoon, though we have reached the twenty-first degree, but there are some local causes here, it would seem, which completely neutralize the influence of latitude. The hottest portion of the Red Sea is said to be from the sixteenth to the twenty-first degrees, though some distance further south the sea is narrower and more confined.

In the evening, the breeze died away, and then came round to the eastward, and all square sails had to be taken in; thermometer fell to 84° with the change.

Distance run two hundred and forty-eight miles. Suez is now only six hundred and ten miles off.

Sunday, 12th. A great change in the weather this morning. The wind has got round to the north, and is quite cool, but very light fortunately; for, as it is, our speed has come down to eight and a half knots. It is said that in this sea the engines will never work up to their full power, though more than the ordinary quantity of fuel be consumed: this is attributed to the extremely saline and dense quality of the water.

The captain, as last Sunday, read prayers on the quarterdeck, all the passengers and the European portion of the ship's company attending.

The principal part of the crew here, as in the Madras, are Lascars, but much finer looking men than in the latter vessel; and when mustered for inspection on the quarterdeck every Sunday in their gala dresses of whitest muslins and bright coloured

silks, they make a strikingly handsome and picturesque appearance.

Early this morning we passed St. John's Island, which is equally desolate and barren with all the other islands of this sea.

Thermometer down to 82° ; lat. $24^{\circ} 7'$, long. 36° ; and distance run two hundred and six miles.

Monday, 13th. All passengers packing up and preparing to land, which we have now every prospect of doing to-morrow by noon. A letter was presented to the captain, signed by every passenger on board, and giving expression to our feelings of unmingled satisfaction with the conduct of himself and officers, particularly Mr. W——r, the purser, who has earned golden opinions by his kindness and unceasing attention to all our wants and wishes.

One of the most interesting occupations of to-day was the drawing lots for places in the desert transit from Suez to Cairo.

The desert carriages, it seems, carry six persons each, and are started in detach-

ments of five at a time, at intervals of four hours, till all the passengers are disposed of; and, as all generally desire to be among the first to start, it is usual to decide this matter by lot before landing.

We therefore formed ourselves into parties of six, at the suggestion of our indefatigable purser; and, under his auspices, drew lots for precedence. Our party were lucky enough to draw number three carriage, so we shall go in the first detachment.

By noon we had the land in sight on both bows, as we approached the entrance of the Straits of Jubal; and about four o'clock, passing these straits, we entered the Gulf of Suez. The land has still the same rocky, mountainous, and utterly sterile and desolate appearance, which everywhere characterizes the shores of the Red Sea.

As we advanced up the gulf, we met a queer little high-sterned Arab vessel running down to the southward, and saw a wreck lying high and dry upon one of the

long level coral reefs which hereabouts abound near the shore.

Later in the evening we met two very large whales coming down; they passed, one on either side of the ship, at no great distance. One of them was followed by a great flight of large birds, which, whenever the monster rose to the surface, were all flapping, scrambling, and jostling each other, in an insane attempt to settle upon his back. Their object it is difficult to conceive, unless there were some barnacles, or small shell-fish, adhering to the creature's skin, to which they wished to help themselves.

Latitude at noon 27° , longitude $34^{\circ} 19'$, thermometer 81° , and distance run one hundred and ninety-seven miles.

At dusk the wind began to rise, blowing from the north again, and very cool.

CHAPTER XIII.

Arrival at Suez—Mail Camels and their Drivers—Journey across the Desert—Carriages for Desert Travelling—Rest-houses in the Desert—Transparency of the Air—Dead Camels—Excellent Arrangements for Accommodation—First View of Cairo and the Pyramids—Approach to Cairo—Abbas Pacha's New Palace—Mud Huts of the Arabs—Splendour and Dirt—The Hotels—Dragomen and Donkey Boys—Boulac—Night Scene—Weary Camels—Bedouin Camel Drivers—Careful Conveyance of Luggage.

TUESDAY, 14th. Wind increased to a fresh breeze last night, reducing our speed to six knots; unless it moderates we shall not reach Suez till late. So great is the change of temperature and in the climate altogether, that every one is coming out in cloth clothing this morning; and the lassitude with which all have been more or less oppressed since we first entered the tropics is rapidly passing away under the invigorating influence of this fine north wind.

A large Arab vessel with two masts

passed us, running down before the wind. Like that of last evening, it was an odd-looking craft, carrying large latine sails, but so raised at the after-part and stern as to bear a very down-by-the-head and unweatherly appearance.

The breeze died away as the morning advanced, and we again progressed rapidly. About noon we passed over the scene of Pharaoh's watery overthrow, or, at least, the spot pointed out by Arab tradition as the locality of that signal misfortune; though another spot much higher up the gulf, and above the anchorage near Suez, is fixed upon in the opinions of most modern travellers, who have studied the ground, as the real scene of the disaster.

The Well of Moses, so singularly situated upon the very beach close to the waters of this briny sea, is rendered very conspicuous by its small surrounding patch of dark palms and bushes—the only trace of verdure, or sign of vegetation, that breaks the dreary sterility of the yellow,

sandy waste which spreads all round the head of the Suez gulf.

About one o'clock we reached the bay of Suez, one thousand two hundred and ninety-six miles from Aden, and came to anchor three or four miles off the shore, the extreme shallowness of the water preventing the nearer approach of vessels of large tonnage. The mail steamer from Bombay was at anchor in the roads, and a fleet of the little cock-tailed Arab vessels were lying in among the shoals close to the town.

Long before we anchored, the small Egyptian steamer that conveys passengers to the shore was seen wending her tortuous way among the reefs and shallows, as she steamed out to meet us. This vessel belongs to the Egyptian Government, into whose hands we were now to be delivered for transit across the desert to Cairo.

We were scarcely at anchor when she came alongside, and took on board with surprising despatch all the mail-boxes and

the passengers' luggage, the whole of which had been got on deck during the morning, and stacked near the gangways. Then we were hastily summoned to tranship ourselves; and taking a hurried leave of our kind friends of the Bengal, we crowded on to the little steamer's deck, and she dashed away.

As we parted from our noble ship we gave her three hearty cheers, which were vigorously returned from quarterdeck and forecastle.

The appearance of the town of Suez viewed from the bay is remarkable and singular, standing almost in the water's edge upon the border of the flat, bare, sandy waste, which stretches away beyond as far as the eye can reach. The town strongly partakes of the desolate, blasted, and deserted aspect of the surrounding scene, owing to the peculiar construction of the houses, which at a distance would all appear to have been unroofed and dismantled, or rather to have been abandoned

incomplete. The roofs being flat are not perceptible, whilst the extraordinary ragged and uneven outlines of the wall-tops suggest the idea that the upper parts are wanting.

On landing, however, a busy, animated scene presented itself—hundreds of camels were lying about ready saddled for the conveyance of the mails, passengers' luggage, and other cargo; whilst their dark Bedouin drivers and attendants were making the most of their last moments of rest, drinking in the small dirty coffee-shops, or smoking the long chibouk, and playing with little circular and particularly dingy cards at some incomprehensible, but apparently very exciting, game in the shade of the narrow streets.

Swarms of dirty boys, too, who appear to have no other occupation, instantly assail you as you set foot on shore, and torment you with incessant clamour for *baksheesh*.*

* Small gifts, or presents of money.

Presently, the mails and luggage being landed, the work of loading the camels began. These sour, ill-tempered looking creatures, which had been lying in groups, snappishly contending with each other over a meagre allowance of very broken and dirty straw, placed in small heaps upon the ground among them, were now brought forward to the loading yard, and made to crouch down to receive their burthens. Some yielded to the signal to lie down (a sharp jerk upon the bridle or halter) with obedient readiness, while others growled, snapped, and resisted, only submitting after frequent jerkings and repeated sharp blows of the driver's cane upon their long scraggy legs and necks.

The burthen placed upon each camel is very great—*two* heavy mail-boxes or passengers' large trunks upon either side of the saddle. The poor animals kept up an incessant complaining cry whilst loading; and the affrighted looks and increased bellowings of those which, from the more

bulky appearance of the packages placed upon them, seemed to think they were being overloaded, were quite painful to witness.

If a load be manifestly too heavy, the sagacious camel refuses to rise; but growling, roaring, and snapping in a most savage manner, retains his crouching attitude, spite of stripes and blows; the pack must then be removed, and re-adjusted.

When we consider that these wonderful creatures, loaded here at Suez, go the whole way through to Cairo, eighty-two miles, without rest or relief, we cannot feel much surprise at their evident terror and dread of being too heavily burthened.

About an hour and a half after our landing, the first detachment of carriages, five in number, was ready to start, and thirty of us got away, six in each. These carriages are of a peculiar construction—like shortened omnibus-bodies mounted on two large, high wheels: they are tolerably easy

on the springs, are well padded and fitted inside, have three shafts, and are drawn by a couple of stout mules as shafters, with a pair of good, lively Arab horses leading.

We set out at a capital pace over the compact, hard, gravelly surface of the level desert, which here exhibits none of that loose, sandy instability which we had expected to discover. We rattled on, our Arab coachman driving at a good pace, but steadily and well.

Stations have been constructed every five miles all the way across; and at every twenty miles there is a rest-house, and provision for the refreshment of travellers.

We changed horses at every station, and night had closed by the time we reached the first rest-house, where we halted an hour, and sat down to a capital hot supper of fowls and eggs, with mutton stewed with gourds, and dressed in various ways.

When we again proceeded, the last lingering rosy tints had completely forsaken the west; but such was the transparent

purity of the keen dry air, that not the road alone, but all objects to some distance on either hand, were plainly discernible in the clear starlight.

The dried remains of camels, which have at different times fallen victims to the severity of the caravan labour, could be seen at intervals lying upon the road; and occasionally we met long strings of these gaunt creatures stalking along in shadowy indistinctness, and with slow, measured, and noiseless step, conveying supplies of water or provender to the different stations.

At the next rest-house, forty miles from Suez, another hot meal awaited us, to which, however, we were hardly prepared to do justice, after our recent exertions in that way. Here we were allowed a halt of an hour and a half, and were able to get a little sleep, to which end beds and couches are provided at this station. Indeed, nothing can exceed the excellence of the arrangements, or the attention to the comfort and convenience of the passengers on

this route ; and we have arrived at the conviction that the discomforts and miseries of the desert journey must have existence only in the imaginations of fastidious travellers, who would assuredly not here find much to grumble at, had they ever journeyed in her Majesty's mail carriages in Australia.

As we advanced towards Cairo, the surface of the desert became more sandy, and broken into wave-like undulations ; and the road, which nearer Suez was formed by merely removing the larger stones and gravel from the naturally hard surface, was now regularly formed, levelled, and Macadamized.

Long before dawn we reached the last rest-house, where, to our surprise, yet another savoury smoking repast was set out in readiness for us. This was too much ; we could not stand such incessant duty, and all absolutely refused to make a fresh attack. After an hour's rest, we again proceeded ; and at sunrise, on the

morning of the 15th, coming to the summit of a sand ridge, from whence the surface of the desert declined gradually towards the alluvial plains of the river, we were cheered and excited to the highest pitch by a first view of wondrous Cairo, with its famed gardens, and its dark palm groves, skirting the turgid waters of Old Father Nile about ten miles distant.

Casting our eyes around in eager search for the great Pyramids, we presently descried their sharp summits illumined by the sun's early rays, and showing like mountain peaks above the rugged crest of a high, stony ridge bordering the desert on our left.

We went forward in great spirits; the sharp morning air was pure and fresh, and the sun shone bright and cheery. Coming to the last station, five miles from Cairo, we had for the first time some trouble with the horses. The rule which had been thus far adhered to, of putting a pair of mules in the shafts, was now departed from, and

all horses used, but with unsuccessful results; the horses jibbed and reared, pulled this way, that way, and every way but the right; and we had scarcely got all fairly off, before the last carriage, filled with ladies and children, came down with a great crash, both shaft horses falling together. Some of us hurried back to the rescue, and found an array of pale faces, and a good deal of alarm, but no harm done; and the struggling horses having been released, and got upon their legs again, went this time quietly off, satisfied with this little ebullition of ill-temper.

The magnificent new palace, built by the late Abbas Pasha, forms a fine object as you approach Cairo; it stands far apart from the city, quite on the border of the desert. This extraordinary site was chosen, it is said, under the impression that here the pure air of the desert would prove a defence against the cholera.

Leaving the palace behind, we shortly reached the alluvial plain of the river,

where sand and gravel were at once exchanged for black mud and dust, and the road became narrow and bad, hemmed in by canals and pools of dirty water, and winding between clumps of the most extraordinary little mud-built Arab dwellings, appearing more like a magnified agglomeration of martins' nests, than anything else it would be possible to compare them with, and vast mounds of rubbish, the accumulation of ages, broken pottery, rags, dust, and straw. These enormous mounds assume quite the proportions of hills, are covered with windmills, and form conspicuous objects in the landscape, impressing the beholder in a forcible way with a sense of the great populousness and antiquity of the city.

Passing all these we now entered Grand Cairo, once the great, the victorious El Kaherah, the wonder of Europe and pride of the East, and still a very wonderful and very busy place, with thronged bazaars and crowded streets; but, at first sight, a

strange combination of splendour and dirt, of decay and magnificence, of muddy gardens and dusty squares, of narrow streets, ancient mosques, tall rickety houses, overhanging balconies, unglazed windows, and dirty, unpainted wood. The use of paint would appear to be unknown in Cairo, or its application at least confined to the skins of the ladies, who here, as at Aden, tint the eyelids and stain the feet and hands.

There are three hotels in Cairo, all kept by Europeans; the principal is Shepherd's, to which we proceeded with all haste but found it full, though the house contains ninety bedrooms; the others are Williams's hotel and the Hôtel d'Orient, kept by a Frenchman; here we found lodgings, and were glad to repose after our long night's journey, and to remain as quiet as the frequent applications of Dragomen offering their services, and the incessant clamour of the crowd of donkey boys about the gate would permit.

Every attempt to stroll quietly out into

the square, as the evening approached, was frustrated by these tormentors, who rushed tumultuously at every one who descended into the courtyard, loudly clamouring and disputing with each other, all caning their donkeys forward in the scramble for precedence, caning their rivals' donkeys to keep them back, and often falling to, when disappointed, to cane each other. The donkey boys of Cairo are as great a plague as the ebony and trinket sellers of Ceylon.

Late in the evening, towards ten o'clock, we received notice that the camels from Suez were arriving, and that it was necessary for those of the passengers who proposed remaining at Cairo to attend at Boulac and separate their luggage from that going on direct to Alexandria. We, therefore, set out at once for Boulac, which is the port of Cairo on the Nile, and about a mile and a half distant from the Hôtel d'Orient. Our conveyance was a smart London-built open carriage, of which there are abundance here plying for hire, drawn

by a showy pair of well-conditioned Arabs or barbs, and driven by a dusky Egyptian in gay attire and brilliant red fez cap.

Arrived at the port, a charming scene of novelty and interest presented itself. Passing an arched gateway guarded by Egyptian sentinels, we entered a large inclosed space upon the river bank imperfectly lighted with great flambeaux of peculiar construction, iron cages filled with blazing wood splinters, and fastened upon the ends of long poles stuck upright in the ground. Several of these *cressets* were placed about the inclosure, casting their lurid glare across the place, and rendering dimly visible the outlines of masts and steamers by the bank; but casting into deeper shadow all beyond upon the waters of the broad Nile, whose rapid current could be heard, however, passing with quiet plashy sound among the numerous vessels moored in the stream, and whose noble breadth was in part revealed by the far sounds of oars and voices upon the waters,

and by the distant gleam of lights upon the opposite shore.

We had barely time to observe all this when the camels began to arrive in long interminable single file, each linked by his slender halter to the saddle of the animal which preceded him; and as they thus entered the inclosure and advanced towards the lights with slow, measured step, their tall gaunt forms magnified to yet more imposing proportions by the uncertain glare of the flaring torchlight, and by the huge piled loads which they so patiently bore, there was a shadowy unreality and strangeness in the whole scene which made all appear like the visions of a dream.

Advancing into the throng which had now assembled for the work of unloading, the creatures one by one came silently on, with high-raised heads quietly chewing the cud, and looking about them with an intelligent expression of contentment which plainly told that they now well knew their long and painful toil was ended. Reaching

the appointed spot, at the first signal from the driver they quietly lay down, and the work of unloading was quickly proceeded with. There was no display of anger, no growling or snapping now. Men and boys crowded about the prostrate animals, stooped beneath their necks or brushed against their very noses without hesitation or fear; indeed, the noisy, threatening, savage brutes departing from Suez could in no way be recognized in the compliant, docile creatures now arriving at Boulac.

As they were relieved of their burdens, at a signal from their drivers, the camels rose, passed on, and again laid down in darkness at a distant part of the yard, there to await, with their characteristic patience, the moment when the whole caravan being unloaded they should be led forth to the sheds where they feed and repose after their long, weary march. Many of the jaded creatures the moment their loads were removed would turn their heads, and, with a droll twist of their long birdlike necks,

dexterously poke their great noses beneath the pommel, and ease the clumsy saddle from their galled and aching backs; but the appearances of exhaustion or fatigue were altogether far less than we had anticipated, either as regards the animals or their drivers. The latter are Bedouins, who, through their Sheikh, contract with the Pasha to perform the desert transport service. They, like their camels, walk the whole eighty miles through from Suez, without sleep or rest, and now, though they looked like weary men, they showed no symptoms of failing, but even assisted in the unloading their beasts.

This operation went forward swiftly and with the utmost regularity, and after all the dismal accounts we had heard of the damaging treatment of luggage in the desert transit, we were agreeably surprised to find all our packages as perfect and safe as when passed over the gangway of the Bengal. The accidents and destruction we have heard complained of, doubtless arise

chiefly from the inexperience or want of precaution of travellers in using packages of inconvenient size or impossible shapes, for packing on the backs of animals. With strong portmanteaus, or ordinary trunks, no mishaps are to be apprehended; but travellers must not expect, as it appears they sometimes do, that pianos or band-boxes can be safely transported over the desert.

My companions and myself got all our baggage together without difficulty, and saw it placed apart under proper custody, and then having taken coffee and a chibouk with a grave old cross-legged Turk, whose authority appeared to be absolute within these gates, we regained our carriage outside, and returned to our hotel, which we reached about midnight.

CHAPTER XIV.

Cairo Early Astir—Narrow Streets—Runners—The Grand Square—Sights of the City—Muddy Results of Irrigation—Mosque and Palace of Mohammed Ali—Dancing Dervishes—Visit to the site of Heliopolis—Cultivation of Desert Land—A Peep under a Yashmack—Egyptian Horses—Purchases in the Bazaar—Sharpness of the Cairenes—The “Prophet’s Foot.”

THURSDAY, 16th. The sun rose bright and clear this morning as he is wont to do in rainless Egypt, the light mists which during the night spread from the Nile over the city quickly rose and drifted away, and all Cairo, in compliance with oriental custom, was early astir.

On the broad, shady promenade which faces the hotel, already were to be seen smart European equipages bearing red fez capped Moslems, the indispensable attendant runner dashing along before, and, cane in hand, unceremoniously clearing the way.

Fat, solemn Turks were also abroad, slowly pacing on high-fed steeds with rich trappings and gold embroidered saddle-cloths; and energetic passengers who, intending to go straight through to Alexandria, had but a few hours to spend here, were already in the hands of the watchful donkey boys, and jogging off for a hurried view of some of the principal sights.

For ourselves, having resolved to tarry awhile on this interesting portion of the journey, we remained quiet till we had breakfasted, and then taking a carriage and a dragoman, we sallied forth, four in number, and set to lion hunting in earnest. The charge for a carriage is a hundred piastres (twenty shillings) for the day, and dragomen in abundance offer their services at twenty piastres.

The streets of Cairo are very crowded and of divers widths, or rather, it should be said, of various degrees of narrowness; there are many which no vehicle can attempt to enter, and in which, indeed, two

donkeys cannot pass each other without difficulty; others, again, are just wide enough to admit a carriage, and in passing these, the runner, who always scampers on before the horses, has an active and busy time of it.

Shouting at the top of his voice to warn approaching vehicles or camels to make timely retreat into cross streets and archways, he, with his cane, disposes of all lesser obstructions in the most summary and uncompromising manner; donkeys he beats, pushes, and shoves up into doorways, with an occasional thwack across the shoulders of the owner, by way of quickening his motions. Children he threatens and hunts under cover; and the motley, thronging passengers are driven to range themselves at the sides, where they stand flattening their backs to the walls, whilst the carriage wheels pass within an inch of their noses, and shave alarmingly close to their toes.

The calm, passive indifference with

which the Cairenes submit to this rough handling is very remarkable; even a stroke of the cane is received by a stout fellow without any exhibition of anger or excitement, when applied by the syasai or runner, who would seem in this respect a privileged man, and who appears to be here considered as indispensable a part of an equipage as the driver or the horses.

Some streets there are in Cairo where carriages or arabas may pass without difficulty; and around the grand square, or, as it may be more correctly designated, wet, muddy garden in front of the hotels, there is a fine broad way bordered with trees, under the shade of which, seated upon chairs and benches, people of every class may at all times be seen drinking coffee, or quietly enjoying a chibouk or nargileh, supplied from little booths or sheds hard by.

The principal sights we disposed of to-day were the Shoobra gardens and fine palace of Alim Pasha, near the bank of the

Nile, not far from the city. The principal attraction is the great fountain attached to the palace; it is a perfect lake of marble, has a small pleasure-boat upon its surface, and is surrounded with open marble corridors. At each corner is a spacious drawing-room or divan, fitted up in mixed European and Turkish style; one of these saloons is particularly magnificent and rich, the entire floor being composed of the most elaborate and beautiful inlaid work in different coloured woods, a kind of wood Mosaic.

The gardens are rather remarkable for their kiosks, fountains, and shady trellises, than for any great degree of neatness or finish. The muddy results of copious irrigation are everywhere apparent, and the flowers are of the most common kinds, and in small variety. The roses, however, have a fine perfume, and the general effect is very pleasing.

The Nile here is in width about the same as the Clarence at Grafton; and though

near three months past, the high flood is still very rapid and muddy.

Friday, 17th. This morning we removed to Shepherd's Hotel from the Orient, being ill satisfied with the latter, chiefly with the arrangements of the table d'hôte, where the fare was not only indifferent, but so straitened in quantity, that the dishes were always cleared before the appetites of the guests were appeased. And having so lately escaped from shipboard, the pure, clear air of Egypt made us feel indisposed to submit to any tightness in the larder department.

We employed the forenoon in a visit to the citadel hill, which commands a fine view of the city, the Nile, and the Pyramids. Within the fortress are the beautiful mosque and the palace of Mohammed Ali, and near the gate we were shown the spot where Emin Bey, by forcing his horse to leap from the ramparts, saved himself from slaughter during the well-known massacre of the Mamelukes. If the height

was then as great as it now is, the successful issue of the exploit would appear little less than a miracle.

On entering the mosque we were desired to leave our boots at the threshold, but everywhere we were treated with the most deferential attention and civility by custodes and attendants. Occasionally small urchins would go through the motion of spitting at us as the carriage passed along, but these looked woefully terrified if they saw that they were noticed, and generally they seemed to think it more profitable to run after us and beg baksheesh.

In the afternoon we went to witness the performance of a set of dancing dervishes. Twenty or thirty men, under the direction of a chief, took part in the ceremonies, ranged in a semicircle within a spacious chamber; these began bowing at first slowly, the chief standing inside the ring, and giving the time; at every inclination a low, hollow groan was uttered by all. This performance continued near an hour, the

groans increasing in intensity, and the bowing in vehemence and rapidity, till the frantic blockheads fairly roared, and swept the ground with their long, loose hair.

In the meanwhile, two youths in high conical hats had, with arms extended, kept perpetually spinning round with a rapidity and endurance which was the most extraordinary feature in the whole performance.

The entertainment was concluded by one of the most heated of these bowing simpletons reeling out of the circle, and with well feigned frenzy running his head two or three times butt against the wall; but we observed that he judiciously checked his career always just as his crown came in contact with the plaster, which, with all his pretended fury, he did not strike hard enough to damage his scalp, or draw a single drop of blood, and he was soon laid hold of and carried off by his companions.

The whole performance was calculated to excite only feelings of disgust and contempt for a set of sturdy fellows who could so absurdly misspend their time.

Saturday, 18th. Visited the ruins, or rather the site, of Heliopolis, upon the border of the desert, and about four miles from Cairo. All that now remains of that once famous city are some mounds of broken pottery and dust, similar to those which surround Cairo, but on a smaller scale, and the fine obelisk of Asirtasen, near seventy feet high, which rises from a pool of water in the middle of a garden, and is surrounded by a grove of fine orange and citron trees, above the tops of which it shows conspicuously as you approach from the desert.

Between Cairo and Heliopolis, a successful attempt has been made to bring a part of the desert sands under culture by means of irrigation. The water for this purpose is raised from wells by means of the rude Egyptian wheel and chain of earthen jars; the whole machinery is so rude, simple, and easy of construction, that it might be advantageously adopted in Australia for similar purposes.

The land thus reclaimed is chiefly planted with olive trees, which look healthy and thriving. It is said that most of the sands of the Suez desert are sufficiently fertile to support vegetation, if a supply of water could be obtained for irrigation, and there is an impression here that much remains to be done in this way.

At Heliopolis, some Arabs gathered around us, begging baksheesh; amongst them was a young girl, whose bright eyes sparkled through the openings of her yashmack. Producing a small coin, I made signs that it should be hers if she would uncover her face; quickly dropping her veil, the girl, who was very good-looking, snatched the coin from my hand, and with affected confusion ran laughing away. Soon, however, she returned, with the yashmack readjusted, but showing by the joyous expression which beamed from the half concealed eyes, that she by no means disapproved of this Frankish curiosity.

The sun was very hot to-day, and in

returning, our horses jibbed most obstinately at the sands of the desert road. In vain we got out, and walked; the brutes at last refused to draw the empty carriage. I mounted the box myself, and almost drove our good-humoured Egyptian coachman to despair, by my vigorous use of the whip, but all would not do; after a short burst the horses stopped again, and whipping was of no avail. We all walked on, leaving the coachman and his nags to settle the matter between themselves, and after we had proceeded above a mile, they overtook us, to our great satisfaction, as night was closing; and being now clear of the sands, we proceeded without further obstruction, and reached our hotel late in the evening. The Egyptian horses are not very staunch in the collar, and I would advise all travellers who do not like walking through deep sands, not to allow themselves to be persuaded to visit Heliopolis with less than four to their carriage.

Sunday, 19th. In the Turkish bazaar to-

day we made a few purchases of carpets, and slippers handsomely embroidered with gold, which are the most attractive articles the place affords; we also provided ourselves with the universal red fez cap or tarboosh, which is worn by all here, foreigners as well as natives; a hat is seldom seen in Cairo.

The Cairenes, Turks as well as Egyptians, are very sharp and greedy in their dealings, and when selling to a stranger will ask twice as much as a thing is worth; of this we were warned by our dragoman, but were, I believe, a good deal taken in after all.

In the afternoon we visited some old and ruined mosques and tombs outside the city to the north; in one of the former, a part of which is kept in repair in order to preserve the precious relic, we were shown an impression of the *Prophet's foot*. The mark has certainly quite the appearance of the impression of a large human foot, deep sunk in what is now a hard black stone; but which would seem to have been a soft

yielding substance when the footmark was imprinted. The stone is inclosed in a kind of sanctuary, and approached with much reverence; yet, with strange inconsistency, it is covered with a dirty rag of a chintz curtain, which would disgrace a Punch and Judy show.

CHAPTER XV.

The Isle of Rhoda—Egyptian Fruits—The Nilometer—Sums Lavished by the Pashas on Furniture and Ornament—"The Grand Excursion"—Difficulties in Reaching the Pyramids—Novel Mode of Crossing Canals—Pyramid of Cheops—A Meal under shadow of the Pyramids—The Ascent—Wonder and Admiration—Description of the Pyramids—The Summit—Exploration of the Interior—The Sphinx.

MONDAY, 20th. A visit to the pretty island of Rhoda, which divides the rushing current of the Nile, opposite old Cairo, a few miles above the present city, occupied the greater part of to-day.

Rhoda, which may be near a mile in length, is of the richest soil, and is prettily laid out as a garden and pleasure ground, with fountains, grottos, and shady walks; but here, as at Shoobra—and the same may be said of all the gardens about Cairo—there is a rough, unfinished style, with muddy walks

and weedy corners enough to make an English gardener despair.

Oranges are in great quantity in these gardens, and in appearance very fine; some mandarins were of an extraordinary size. The gardener who guided us freely helped us to these; but we found them, like all other Egyptian fruits, deficient in sweetness and flavour. The very copious and frequent irrigations, which are here employed in every kind of culture, render all the vegetables, as well as fruits, of Egypt extremely watery and insipid.

It was at Rhoda, according to Arab tradition, that Moses was found by Pharaoh's daughter; but the principal attraction which brings strangers to the island is the famed Nilometer, with the appearance of which we were, however, greatly disappointed. It is merely a small, mean-looking, graduated stone pillar, standing in an enclosed tank of moderate dimensions, and to which the water of the Nile is admitted through an opening in the masonry at one side; but

the whole has been so patched, repaired, and renovated, that there is nothing ancient nor very interesting in its appearance.

The fine palace occupying the southern or upper extremity of the island, and amongst the buildings of which the Nilo-meter may be said to be included, shows a greater degree of completeness and finish than any we have hitherto visited, and in the furniture and decorations an appearance of *comfort* as well as *luxury* is combined with the greatest display of taste and magnificence.

The palace belongs to Ismail Pasha, a grandson, I believe, of old Mohammed Ali, whose numerous descendants and relations really seem to possess amongst them all that is worth having in and around Cairo, whether palace or garden, vessel lying in the river or corn-field on the bank; and one sickens of the oft-repeated answers to one's inquiries as to ownership, when the names of Alim Pasha, Hossayn Pasha, widow of Abbas Pasha, or son, wife, or daughter of

this, that, or the other Pasha meet one at every turn.

The sums lavished by the Pashas in ornamenting and furnishing their palaces are enormous; £50,000 sterling, it is said, were lately expended in this way by Alim Pasha on the Shoobra palace. The mirrors, decorations, and furniture appear to be chiefly of French workmanship.

Tuesday, 21st. This day was devoted to *the grand* excursion to which we have so long looked forward with intense interest—the visit to the great Pyramids.

Making an early start from Shepherd's, we proceed in a carriage as far as old Cairo, where, having provided ourselves with donkeys, we crossed the Nile in a rude ferry-boat to Geezeh. Mounting our donkeys to proceed, we soon discovered that much of the alluvial plain which intervenes between the river and the high, rocky border of the desert upon which the Pyramids stand was still covered by the waters of the inundation, or was in the condition of soft mud,

and it was therefore necessary to make a long detour by some raised dykes which crossed the plain.

After following these some four or five miles we were again stopped by waters, the last inundation, which was an unusually high one, having broken through the dykes and overthrown the bridges. By this time, however, we had been joined by several of the Arabs who dwell in this neighbourhood, and who, it would appear, lose no opportunity to make their account by the difficulties and perplexities of the numerous visitors to the Pyramids.

After much chaffering with our dragoon, these fellows agreed to convey us across the water in their leaky old boat for thirty piastres (six shillings) each. Leaving our donkeys we embarked: our wretched craft, which was propelled by means of one broken oar and a stick, conveyed us at a provokingly slow rate, till, after threading the canals and broken dykes for about a mile, we were again landed yet a couple of miles from the Pyramids.

Hurrying forward, we had not walked far, when a broad canal crossing our path, once more brought us to a stand, and the guides again desiring to take advantage of our difficulty, were soon engaged in an angry dispute with our dragoman as to the amount to be charged for carrying us over upon their shoulders. Whilst they were thus engaged, I, losing patience, quickly stripped, and packing my clothes upon my head, crossed to the opposite side.

This movement had the effect of bringing the dispute to a conclusion; and the disconcerted guides agreed to give their services to the Pyramids, and back again to the boat, for forty piastres each.

My two companions were now promptly borne over safe and dry upon the lusty shoulders of these powerful looking Arabs, though the water reached to their armpits; and after crossing two or three more channels and sloughs in the same mode, we reached the dry sands of the desert, a short distance from our goal.

As we approached the Pyramids, we were disappointed with their effect. Standing as they do in a vast plain, removed from all other buildings or objects with which the eye could compare them, their appearance is less imposing than their known dimensions lead one to look for. It is only when coming close under their giant shadows, and near enough to distinguish the proportions of the blocks of stone of which they are built, that a real sense of the astounding magnitude of these wonderful structures is fully realized.

A considerable and rather steep slope leads from the edge of the plain up to the foot of the great Pyramid of Cheops, under the broad shade of which—for the declining sun still shone hotly—we sat down, before attempting the ascent, to discuss the contents of the well-stored hamper we brought with us from Cairo.

Here we were joined by an old Arab Sheikh, who lives in a small mud village hard by, under the shade of a grove of

date palms, and who, it would seem, is held responsible for the safety of all travellers visiting the Pyramids.

He is bound to have guides always in readiness to attend those who wish to mount to their summits, or descend the dark passages of the interior: and the poor old man, who approached us on horseback, after dismounting, and taking his seat upon the sand near our party, showed us the swollen and bruised condition of the soles of his feet, the result, he said, of a recent application of the bastinado, in consequence of an accusation of neglect of his functions in this particular.

This old Sheikh expects, and is, I believe, entitled to a fee of about twenty piastres from every traveller visiting the Pyramids; and the old scamp partook without scruple of the wine, beer, and other infidel fare, to which we treated him. The attendants greedily devoured all that we could spare, and more, too; for their troublesome importunities induced us rather to intrench upon our own allowance.

Our meal ended, we began the ascent of the larger Pyramid; and when about half-way up the enormous side, I must confess that its vast extent filled me with wonder and admiration. Though already at such a giddy height, the summit still looked as distant as ever, while, on either hand, the mighty expanse of masonry seemed to stretch away to a distance without limit.

The ascent is not difficult after the first dizzy sensation has been subdued; the terraces or steps are very regular, from two to three feet high, and seldom less than two feet broad, except where broken and crumbled away, and these parts may be easily avoided.

The attendant Arabs, with a view to ultimate baksheesh, would fain persuade you that there is danger in proceeding alone; and are disposed to insist on helping you to ascend, by lugging and pushing at you. I was compelled to be very peremptory before I could convince them

that I intended to be let alone, and to go my own way.

There is a sort of landing, or resting-place, about half-way up the Pyramid, where, upon one of the angles, some of the stones having been removed or fallen down, a recess or cavern is formed, disclosing the structure and material of the body of the pile; and it is here seen that the outer courses only are of dressed stone, the interior being formed of rugged blocks, rough as they were torn from the quarry, and merely adjusted one to the other as well as their irregular forms will admit.

The summit of the Pyramid is a level square of about thirty feet, formed by the removal of the blocks which anciently constituted the apex. The soft, white stone which is here of the same description as that disclosed in the cave or breach before mentioned, bears countless evidences of the ambitious aspirations of travelling Johnsons, Thomsons, and Smiths. Many German names, too, are elaborately graven in these

tormented stones. The guides produced their knives, and offered to clear away some of the names, to afford space for us to carve ours, adding, that if we gave "good baksheesh," they would preserve our work from similar erasure.

The view from the top of the Pyramid, though very extensive and fine, commands few objects which cannot be seen from the hillocks at its base, and as the sun was getting low we soon descended, and proceeded to explore the interior.

From the entrance, which is considerably above the base of the Pyramid, we first descended a long way by a low, sloping passage, lined with immense slabs of polished granite; then clambering up through a hole broken into the solid masonry, we gained another long, narrow passage, ascending at about the same angle as the descent of the first. Groping our way along this, guided by the feeble light of the slender wax tapers carried by our guides, we reached a small chamber, and

finally, after more threading some dark, intricate galleries, we were conducted to the principal, or king's chamber, as it is called; this is some thirty feet long, about half as much in width, and of a considerable height, the ceiling being but imperfectly visible in the dim candlelight. An empty and uncovered sarcophagus in this room, is the only object seen within the Pyramid, affording visible evidence of its use and purpose; the long, narrow passages, small chambers, slopes, and turnings, puzzle and vex one by their seemingly unmeaning intricacies, for which one in vain endeavours to assign a probable reason.

Whilst in the heart of the Pyramid at the king's chamber, our guides somewhat noisily assailed us with demands for more money, and seemed inclined to assume a rather bullying tone. Guessing that intimidation was their drift, we flatly refused compliance, and treated their clamour with the most perfect indifference;

finding this, they soon desisted, and resumed their former civil and good-humoured demeanour.

Returning to the light of day, we next visited the Sphynx, which I thought more remarkable for the sweet expression yet retained in its time-worn features than for its magnitude; the figure has been cut and shaped out of the live rock, a mass of which has been left standing for the purpose, whilst the surrounding parts have been cleared away; its proportions, therefore, though colossal, did not strike me as at all astonishing.

The Pyramids stand upon an elevated plateau of solid rock, to form which a range of heights has been cut away and levelled, as is evident from the portions of the range which remain standing at a distance; and the immense mounds and accumulations of small fragments and stone dressings which encumber the sides of the plateau, would appear to indicate that the material of the demolished range

has been worked up in constructing the Pyramids.

The yawning excavations seen on all sides where tombs and sepulchres, cut to a depth of fifty or sixty feet in the rock, have been opened up and rifled of their contents, tell how vain have been the endeavours of those by-gone generations, who doubtless, when causing themselves to be placed at that depth beneath the earth, felt secure that their bones would be undisturbed till the end of time.

We purchased from the Arabs a few little figures and fragments in bronze and stone, which they obtain by digging and searching among the tombs; but we are told that the fellows are clever in making imitations in baked clay, and it is even said that numbers of little antique bronzes are manufactured at Birmingham, and sent to the Pyramids for sale. For the truth of this story I will not vouch, but it appears certain that it is very necessary to use caution in buying wares of this sort even

when at the Pyramids, and among the very tombs.

We reluctantly set out on our return about an hour before sunset, and reached Cairo between seven and eight o'clock, delighted with our day's excursion.

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to Joseph's Granary—Mountains of Grain—Dull Cairo—Cairene Marriage Ceremonies—Brides and Bridegrooms—Pilgrims returning from Mecca—Egyptian System of Stripes and Blows—A Trip up the Nile—Cairo from the River—Nile Excursion Boats—Combination of Economy and Pleasure—Fields of Millet—Pyramids of Sakkara, Dashour, and Asawee—Aground upon a Mudbank—A Day at Benisoeef—Peasant Women—Gentleness of Domestic Animals—Dancing Girls.

WEDNESDAY, 22nd. The principal event of the day was a visit to a government granary at Old Cairo, which tradition points to as the actual granary of Joseph. Like everything Egyptian, it is vast and rude, a considerable space merely enclosed by a wall, and without roofing, or any kind of protection for the grain either from the weather or from the numerous flights of doves and pigeons, both wild and tame, which come to help themselves at pleasure.

The enormous mounds, perfect moun-

tains of wheat, barley, lentils, and beans, which are heaped upon the dusty ground, tower to a height which even from a distance renders them conspicuous objects above the walls and neighbouring buildings. One heap of wheat which appeared the largest, contained, we were told, a certain number of Egyptian measures, which, reduced to English, gave a million and a-half bushels.

Several large Nile boats were discharging their cargoes to swell the dimensions of these monster heaps. The grain, which is stowed in bulk, is brought ashore, and laboriously carried to the summit of the mounds in bags, upon men's backs: one sees few contrivances here to save human labour. The mounds are ascended by means of inclined ways formed of planks bedded in the sides of the mass.

Children were enjoying themselves unmolested, climbing these mimic mountains, and rolling to the bottom again. So vast is the quantity of grain, that a few bushels

more or less thus thrown down and lost upon the dusty ground, is a matter, it would appear, not worth considering; yet the grave, turbaned officials at the granary gates, with paper and reed in hand, and inkhorn stuck within the folds of the ample sash, seemed to be very particular in measuring and taking account of all the grain that entered.

The sun was very warm to-day during the afternoon. The weather generally has been extremely agreeable since we reached Cairo; if the sun is a little warm for a few hours, the mornings are delightfully fresh, and the evenings and nights almost cold. A more agreeable climate than that of Egypt at this season could not be desired.

Thursday, 23rd. As we have still eight or nine days to dispose of before the arrival of the day we have fixed upon for proceeding to Alexandria, Mr. T——s, one of my late cabin companions in the Madras, and myself, have determined to employ this interval in a trip up the Nile, as far as the

limited time will allow us to proceed. This morning we set about our preparations, hoping and intending to get off some time in the evening, but we were soon convinced that things are not to be done in such off-hand style in Egypt.

Though boats fitted for our purpose are abundant, we found it difficult to engage one such as we desired for so short a term, and we were obliged at length to be content with a small and inferior craft, fitted with only one small cabin, and carrying a crew of four men and a boy; for this we agreed to pay six hundred piastres as eight days' charter, and a hundred piastres per day should we exceed that period.

Having completed this arrangement with the rais, or captain of the boat, we flattered ourselves we had nothing more to do but to purchase our provisions and stores, and get on board without delay, but we were soon undeceived; passports, it appears, are necessary for ourselves, and a permit for our dragoman, who, it seems, is only

qualified for the city, and may not act as dragoman up the river, without a formal permission from the head of the dragomen, and the sanction of the police authorities. All this is very annoying, as, to-morrow being the Mussulman sabbath, the offices will be closed, and nothing can be done.

Friday, 24th. Forwarded the preparations for our excursion as much as lay in our power, by completing purchase of supplies, and engaging a cook, who, our dragoman assures us, is a necessary part of the equipment for a Nile excursion.

We also hired a fowling-piece, and we hope to get off to-morrow, for our time will ill bear curtailings; and Cairo, when once sight-seeing is disposed of, is anything but an agreeable place to tarry in. Many causes combine to make Cairo indeed an intolerably dull place of sojourn for a stranger, after the first excitements of novelty have passed off. Among these causes may be reckoned the flies, the dust, the vile smells, and the universal filth; then

the general absence of good looks amongst the people in the streets is displeasing; numbers have lost an eye, and a large proportion of the others have sore eyes, which are rendered more hideously conspicuous by the dirty veil, or yashmack, which conceals the other parts of the face. To all these disagreeables may be added the absence of public entertainments, or diversions of any kind. At nightfall all retire to their homes, and the streets are quite deserted; after dark it is unlawful to stir abroad without a lantern.

There is, it must be acknowledged, a small Italian theatre, supported by the foreign residents in Cairo, but it is a poor affair; I went one night, but do not feel tempted to repeat the visit. The audience did not exceed seventy or eighty persons, among whom were not more than half-a-dozen of the fair sex, and these were not justly entitled to that appellation.

This evening I witnessed a Cairene marriage, or, at least, a part of the attendant

ceremonies. The marriages, for it was a double affair, had taken place during the morning, and the ceremonies at which I was present were those attending the bringing home the brides to their husbands' houses, which were both situated in the same small square, or court. This court was covered in with awnings, brilliantly lighted, and filled with a crowd of the male friends and relatives, who, seated on benches, and gravely puffing the never-failing long chibouk, were regaled with the monotonous strains of an Egyptian band and singers.

As soon as I entered the court under the guidance of my dragoman, a seat was politely provided for me, and coffee offered; and during the evening I was so frequently favoured with offers of the chibouk from those who sat around me, that I was sorely put to it to avoid making a breach either in my good manners or propriety. To refuse the pipe thus offered, is considered discourteous, while for one who eschews tobacco to be kept puffing away at this

merciless rate was no joke, and before the entertainment was over, I felt the steadiness of my head, and stomach too, becoming very doubtful.

As the evening advanced, a bustle in the street, and sounds of approaching music, announced the arrival of the brides: they came from the bath, and were preceded by a long line of light bearers, carrying small wax tapers; these, as they filed in, extinguished their lights, and took their places among the assembled crowd.

Some little delay now occurred whilst a sheep was slain at the gate, and the blood shed upon the threshold before the brides should cross it, and then they entered, surrounded by a crowd of female relatives and attendants, who at regular intervals uttered a wild and very peculiar cry.

The poor little brides, who from their stature appeared to be very young, walked beneath a splendid canopy borne by the attendants, and were besides completely extinguished under a rich vestment of scarlet

and gold, a hat, body, and skirt all in one, which covered them from the crown of the head to the heels; there were no openings even for the eyes, and the poor little things, each guided by the mother, proceeded with the uncertain step of players in blind man's buff. Thus they passed through the court and entered the houses, the windows of which, overhead, were filled with female faces, many of exceeding beauty.

Now came the most remarkable part of the performance: a space having been cleared among the crowd, and a very richly ornamented seat prepared amid a blaze of lights, the two bridegrooms were brought forth, placed side by side upon the seat, and their heads thus publicly shaven, with much pomp and a large consumption of rosewater, which was used instead of lather to moisten the hair, and besides sprinkled freely upon the bystanders.

This ceremony ended, the men re-entered their houses, the lights were extinguished, and the crowd dispersed.

The Cairene girls are allowed no part in the selection of husbands, but are surrendered often at so early an age as ten or twelve years to partners of their parents choosing. The bridegrooms of this evening, the one a Copt and the other a Syrian, were neither young nor good-looking, and probably sad hearts and joyless faces were concealed beneath the gay trappings of the little brides.

Saturday, 25th. We met with so many fresh obstructions and difficulties to-day that we were almost driven to abandon our excursion altogether. Objections were made to our dragoman, and a pass for the Nile refused him; but, as he had served us well since our coming to Cairo, and had all his kit, including cooking utensils, and beds for ourselves on board the boat, we did not wish to part with him. After several visits to the Cadi's court, and reference from one officer to another, we were at length promised that Hassan should be allowed to go; but, when we thought all settled, there

came a messenger from the Cadi with a peremptory order to change our dragoman. We also found it necessary to provide ourselves with a permit to carry a gun up the Nile.

All these difficulties completely consumed the day; but we have to-night, I hope and believe, overcome all obstacles, and got everything prepared for an early start to-morrow. Ali, our new dragoman, does not understand English, which is perhaps an advantage, as we shall be consequently obliged to call up our dormant recollections of French, which he speaks fluently, and be thus compelled to a very beneficial week's practice.

We received some compensation for our delays in witnessing the pageants attending the entry into Cairo of the pilgrims returning from Mecca. The main body of these people had come in during the night, and at an early hour this morning discharges of cannon and strains of martial music announced the approach of the grand

procession, bearing the sacred covering of the Prophet's tomb; this is a silken curtain richly worked in embroidery of gold by the ladies of the Pasha's harems, and yearly sent to Mecca with the pilgrims, who, on their return, bring back the old curtain to be divided into small portions and distributed among the faithful. We found all the streets debouching upon that by which the procession was to pass so densely crowded that, spite of all the exertions of our dragoman, and his frequent recourse to the magic word *Inglis*, it was with great difficulty that we could urge and work our donkeys to the front. A great loaded camel coming irresistibly through the crowd afforded us an opportunity which we did not fail to take advantage of by following close in his wake.

Long ranks of Egyptian troops, horse and foot, who had gone out last evening to meet the caravan in the desert, were already passing; following these came a group of camels, bearing the sacred curtain,

and a number of the more sanctified of the pilgrims. Among these was conspicuous a man, naked to the waist, mounted upon a very tall camel, and, with deep groans, rolling and swaying himself to and fro in real or well-feigned exhaustion; this, we were told, was a godly man who had been advanced to high rank in the Moslem church during his visit to the holy city. After these came horsemen and camels, bearing women and children, and loaded with tents and camp equipage, all looking travel-stained, haggard, and worn. A band of lean, wild-looking Arabs, mounted upon weary horses, covered with dust and armed with long picturesque firelocks, brought up the rear.

While among the crowd I witnessed an instance of that universal system of stripes and blows, one of those practical applications of the law of *might* which one so frequently encounters in Egypt, and which made my blood boil.

A fellow who had the appearance of a

subordinate government official, and whose bright complexion and jetty moustache would bespeak him a Syrian or a Greek, being unable to force his horse through the throng, suddenly dismounted, and pressing on, with a sharp rattan he struck right and left with all his force at the heads and faces of those who stood in his way. One furious blow came right across the face of a young infant borne in its mother's arms, yet the brutal wretch still went slashing on without noticing the agonized exclamations of the terrified mother, or appearing to heed the frantic screams of the tortured child.

Sunday, 25th. We left Shepherd's Hotel at sunrise, and hurried on board our boat at Boulac; but, owing to the dilatory movements of the crew, the morning was far advanced before we left our moorings, and then, the wind being light and the opposing current strong, we made but little progress.

The morning was very bright and clear. Boulac and Old Cairo, with their domes,

palaces, and minarets made, when viewed from the water, a beautiful appearance, and numbers of large cargo-boats floating down the broad current of the Nile, deeply laden with corn, or piled high with large and neatly built stacks of straw, added to the cheerful animation of the scene.

Creeping up the stream like ourselves, or moored by the banks awaiting a better wind, were to be seen several of the fine excursion boats, which at this season are in much request among European travellers for the winter trip up the Nile, and a more agreeable and less expensive mode of spending a winter in travel it would be difficult to find. The best boats are fine craft, sixty or seventy feet long, with a commodious deck-house affording ample accommodation for four persons; they carry a crew of six or seven men, and may be hired ready equipped, at six thousand to eight thousand piastres (£60 to £80) for the trip to the second cataract and back, which will occupy three months. The ex-

cursionists provide a cook and dragoman, and find their own provisions, which will probably not swell the expense to more than double the sum above named, as up the river most kinds of provisions can be obtained at a very cheap rate. Thus, at an expense of about £12 per month, a traveller may spend the three winter months in the most delicious climate, attended by his own servants, living, if I may so express myself, in his own house, and yet enjoying all the delightful excitements of travel in the most interesting portion of the earth.

To all who have leisure, or are in quest of an occupation for the months of December, January, and February, I would say, seek two or three agreeable companions, and make the excursion up the Nile.

We had not progressed above eight or nine miles, when towards evening, the wind dying completely away, we came to moorings beside the bank ; at eight o'clock, however, we got off again with another

puff of wind which lasted till midnight, and carried us a few miles farther.

Monday, 27th. Got away at breakfast time with a light wind, which, soon freshening to a fine breeze, bore us rapidly up the stream. We passed in succession the Pyramids of Sakkara and Dashour: the latter, standing only three or four miles from the river's bank, make a fine appearance.

Arab villages are numerous, occurring at intervals of two or three miles; they are all alike, a cluster of small, low, mud-built hovels, huddled together, and shaded by a thick grove of date palm trees, among the tall ragged stems of which the huts are crowded. Children and pigeons swarm about these villages, and the pigeon-house, a structure formed of layers of earthen pots embedded in a setting of dried mud, is often the tallest and most conspicuous building of the group. Millet appears to be one of the principal crops at this season; we saw many large fields of it during our progress to-day, chiefly of the white variety.

In the evening we passed the remarkable Pyramid of Asawee. It stands several miles back from the river, and in the distance has the appearance of a steep hill crowned by a large square tower.

After nightfall we got aground upon a mud-bank in the middle of the river, and as we were going at a good rate at the time we stuck so fast that, although our crew went unhesitatingly into the water, it was some time before their utmost efforts could get us off again.

Throughout the day the yellow sands and ranges of white limestone rock, which bound the alluvial lands of the Nile, were never out of sight, and occasionally they advance quite to the water's edge. Numerous boats everywhere stud the broad majestic stream, whose windings may be traced in the distance by the white tapering latine sails showing their tall peaks above the level plain.

Tuesday, 28th. The wind failing after midnight, our rais brought to beside the

bank, but started this morning before daylight again, the men tracking the boat against the rapid stream with a long rope.

Shortly after breakfast we reached the town of Benisooef, a hundred and fourteen miles from Boulac; and as we wish to get back to Cairo by Friday night, we determined to go no further up the river, but to pass the remainder of the day at this place, and to set out on our return to-morrow morning.

Accordingly, we got ashore; and after exploring the town and market-place, where large numbers of people were holding a sort of cattle and donkey fair, and vendors of sugar-cane, dates, and other eatables, were contending with clouds of flies, we engaged horses, and set out for a ride among the fields of sugar-cane and millet, which cover the wide plain beyond the town. The horses were lively, spirited animals, and, spite the uncomfortable high-backed saddle, I enjoyed the gallop much. During the ride we saw growing fine tur-

nips and carrots of a peculiarly sweet flavour, and dark red hue; these are eaten like fruit, without cooking.

The people here are better looking than at Cairo, blindness and sore eyes being much less prevalent. The peasant women one meets in the country do not wear the filthy rag over the face, which so disfigures those of Cairo, but merely draw across the features one side of the dark blue cotton mantle which is worn over the head; and we have observed that when the wearer is young and good-looking, this frequently falls open—quite accidentally, of course—or requires readjusting at the moment of our passing. The veils of the old and ill-favoured are always well secured.

I shot a couple of very pretty wild doves this evening, the first fruits of the gun which cost us so much trouble to acquire. We saw some fine flocks of wild geese during our passage up the river, but they were too shy to be got at. The poor doves were so tame and unsuspecting, that

it appeared almost wrong to destroy them.

The confiding gentleness of the domestic animals of Egypt is very striking—from a lamb to a bullock, all will allow themselves to be approached and handled, even by a stranger, without manifesting any signs of suspicion or uneasiness. The camels form an exception; and these, though they growl, complain, and open their wide mouths in a very threatening manner, are often not much disposed to bite, after all; we have nowhere seen them exhibit such determined ill-temper and vice as at Suez, when preparing for the dreadful desert journey.

Hearing that a performance by the dancing girls was to take place to-night at the house of the Cadi of the village, whose son had taken a wife, we went shortly after dark to witness it. We found the narrow street before the door lighted up, and prepared with seats and benches, upon which a large company had already

assembled, and the performance was going on in the open air.

We had not been long seated, when we received an invitation to enter the house; but learning that the dancers would continue their preliminary exercises outside till a late hour, we preferred remaining as we were.

The performers—two young Arab women—were very richly habited in bright coloured silks, and covered with a profusion of gold coins, and ornaments fastened among their long hair, and suspended from every part of their dress, particularly about the waist and bosom. The motions of the dance were more voluptuous than graceful. At every pause, the dancers went round among the company to solicit donations, which they received in the little tambourine which each bore. Every time money was given, the girls set up a loud, peculiar, and most discordant cry.

The contributions, though frequent, were generally made in small copper coin; but

we were told the receipts of these two women for the night, including the sum to be paid them by the master of the house, would not fall short of six or seven hundred piastres; the costliness of their dresses proves that these dancing girls must be well paid.

One movement of the dance was very singular, consisting of a quivering motion of the muscles of the chest, as violent as that seen in a horse when he strives to dislodge a fly from his skin. This set all the ornaments which covered the front parts of the girls' dresses in rapid jingling motion, and produced a most remarkable effect.

It was late when we came away; yet the dancers were still outside the house; after entering which, we were told, their performance would be renewed with greater spirit, and continue till morning.

CHAPTER XVII.

Return Voyage to Cairo—Mohammed Ali's Cotton Factory
—Water Buffaloes—A Skirmish on Board—An Obstinate Rais—Ruins of Memphis—A Lazy Camel—A Nile Village—Supper in a Native Hut—Bedouin Guard at a Landing-place—A Bedouin's Meal.

WEDNESDAY, 29th. After an early swim in the yellow waters of the Nile, which I found unpleasantly cold, we breakfasted; and pushing out of the little fleet of vessels among which we were moored, reluctantly began our return voyage towards Cairo. I would much have preferred proceeding on up the river, had arrangements permitted.

Benisooef, though a place of some note, and a military station, is but a small and dirty town. It boasts a mosque, with a fine minaret; but by far the most imposing object, is a structure on the river bank, outside the town, built by Mohammed Ali for a cotton factory in furtherance of his

unsuccessful endeavours to make Egypt a manufacturing country. The buildings are now partly occupied as barracks.

Below Benisooef, the river being very broad, and obstructed by shoals and mud-banks, we made at first but little progress, drifting with the stream, and getting frequently aground. As the morning advanced, however, we were favoured with a breeze from the southward, a thing scarcely to be hoped for at this season; the wind, though light, was enough to give us steerage way more effectually than the utmost exertions with our heavy, awkward sweeps, and thus keeping in the strongest part of the current and clear of shoals, we went rapidly down the river.

Numbers of the ugly water buffalo, quite resembling those we saw at Ceylon, were browsing among the rank vegetation which covers some low islands here dividing the stream; further on, at a broad part of the river, we saw two boys engaged in an active contest with a couple of these animals,

which they were endeavouring to cross by swimming to the opposite shore. Armed with stout cudgels, which they used in the most unsparing manner, the boys repeatedly drove the creatures into the water, then plunging after, they would mount upon their backs, and strive to guide the reluctant animals forward, by belabouring them about the sides of the head; the buffaloes, however, as if discouraged by the width of the stream, invariably returned to land after a short swim, spite of the utmost exertions of their tormentors; and the contest appeared to be at last interrupted by the complete exhaustion of all parties.

The day, bright and warm, passed pleasantly away without adventure till evening, when at sunset, our *rais* steering to the bank opposite a village, and preparing to moor the boat, we objected; we have planned to visit the pyramids of Sakkara to-morrow, and this we shall not be enabled to do, unless we pursue our course down the river all night. This we urged, and

also pointed out how unnecessary it was to halt, when by merely keeping one man on the watch to guide the boat, and pole off the shallows, we might be floated by the current so many miles on our way before morning.

All argument was, however, lost upon our rais, who obstinately adhered to his purpose, and proceeded to make fast the boat; but our dragoman and cook warmly espousing our side, we felt too strong to be disposed to yield, and finding words were vain, we cut the matter short by hauling the mooring rope on board, and shoving off.

The rais now become abusive: Ali, our dragoman, losing temper, flew at him with his cane; the two speedily closed, and a general skirmish ensued—my friend T——s intercepting one of the crew, who endeavoured to join the rais, and who, we found, was his brother, whilst I went to the rescue of Ali, who, assailed in rear by the boy armed with a piece of firewood, was rather overmatched.

During the contest, our tall latine sail, though loose, giving the boat steerage way, the helmsman took advantage of the confusion to bring us again to the bank, and lay us alongside a large craft filled with men; this the rais and his brother instantly boarded, and endeavoured to incite the people to take their part.

Among the strangers was an imposing old Turk, seemingly a man in authority, with a long sword by his side; he came forward, and desired to be informed of the cause of the row. Ali having explained, our solemn friend delivered himself of an opinion that our cause was just.

All this passed in a few moments, during which we had drifted on, and got clear of the strange vessel; but seeing it was now the intention of the steersman to bring us in contact with another, lying a little further down, I jumped upon the deck-house, pushed the man aside, and seizing the tiller myself, and steering off, we were soon again in mid-stream proceeding on our way.

Our rais now perceiving that we were disposed to go without him, began to take wit in his anger, and, running along the bank, shouted to us to wait; this we did as a great concession, after giving him an opportunity to exercise his legs for about a mile. When we at length took the little man on board, he was quite tamed, but very sulky; he offered no further opposition to the boat's proceeding throughout the night, but wrapping himself in his cloak, lay down in the bows, and would neither stir nor speak.

Thursday, 30th. We made no great progress last night; after all, our craft got aground several times, and at last towards morning, stuck so fast, that it occupied all hands, including the captain, who was roused from his protracted sulky fit by the event, fully an hour to get her off again.

These delays so retarded us, that although we made good way all the forenoon, it was mid-day ere we reached the little village of Bedreshayn, opposite the Sakkara Pyra-

mids, and too late to allow of our visiting them to-day: we therefore contented ourselves with a stroll through the village, and over the ruins of Memphis, which latter cover a large space upon the alluvial plain about a mile back from the present bank of the river. Little is to be seen besides the usual mounds of dust and broken pottery, which ever mark the sites of the ancient cities of Egypt. Here and there a sculptured, but time-worn block of granite, or a broken column, peep from the earth; but near an Arab hut, we saw some fine and well preserved figures, and colossal fragments in granite and porphyry, which have been recently excavated and brought to light.

The entire site of Memphis is covered by a date palm-grove, but the trees are small, and appear to thrive badly upon these dry ridges and heaps of ruin.

During our ramble we met some men riding camels, and, at our suggestion, they promptly and good-humouredly dismounted,

and allowed us to take their places; the camels were made to lie down to enable us to mount. Their motion in rising is very rough, as they first quite raise the hinder portions of the body, and then come up off their knees with a violent jerk. The action, going at a quick shuffle, was less uneasy than I had expected to find it; of the faster paces I had no opportunity to judge, for my beast was so lazy, or self-willed, that my utmost efforts failed to urge him into a trot.

The village of Bedreshayn, like all others we have seen up the river, is built entirely of sun-dried bricks formed of Nile mud, and cemented with the same material. The dwellings, which are huddled closely together, are of the most varied forms and sizes—they only agree in being all flat-topped: some are round, resembling a great inverted tub; some are oblong, and others square, perfect cubes; and in size, they vary from the dimensions of a dog-kennel to those of a large brick-kiln. In the poorer

sort, a raised platform of the same material as the walls, is the only furniture, and does duty as table, seat, and bed-place—a few coarse mats constitute the only bedding.

Entering one of the larger huts this afternoon, we found the female portion of the inmates engaged preparing supper. Two girls at a small stone hand-mill, were grinding to a coarse meal a mixture of wheat and white millet, while the mother was cutting into shreds some raw beef. At this operation a younger girl, a very pretty child, too, was assisting, using her fine white teeth instead of a knife; observing that this attracted our notice, however, she laid down the meat, and looked somewhat abashed.

A kind of soup, we were given to understand, was to be the result of the joint labours of the party. The males of the family appearing uneasy at our presence, we did not prolong our visit, and no sooner were we outside the house, than the door

was closed and fastened : the ladies appeared quite disposed to be agreeable.

Before the village lies a small fleet of boats taking in cargoes, chiefly dates and wool, brought in from the surrounding country upon camels. The dates are packed in baskets, containing from two to three hundred pounds weight, and two of these packages constitute a camel's load.

One of these creatures which came in this evening carrying a bale of wool, was the largest I have met with. As I stood beside him, the crown of my hat barely reached to the lower part of his pack-saddle, and he measured fully four paces from head to tail; his coat was of a jetty black.

The camels of Egypt are of three colours, black, white, and a yellowish brown; the latter colour is by far the most common. All kinds are regularly shorn or shaven, to keep them clean, but there is one long-coated breed, used chiefly by the Bedouins, the hair of which is said to be more valued than the coarse wool of the Egyptian sheep.

At the landing-place near us, a tall, gaunt Bedouin Arab is employed to guard by night the goods awaiting shipment, which lie quite exposed upon the river bank, there being nothing in the shape of warehouse or shed, nor even the rudest attempt at a wharf; the vessels lie against the naked bank, rude as nature, or the last inundation, formed it.

The old Bedouin, who looks as wild and uncultivated as an Australian savage, has his camp close by; and here also, in the dirty, half naked wife and child, the starved dogs, and the greasy bags containing his worldly goods, one finds a close resemblance to the camp of a native of Australia; but here the resemblance ends; and for the rest, the Arab's camp will not bear comparison with that of the Australian. The ragged piece of hair-cloth stretched over a few sticks, is a poor substitute for the more substantial sheet of bark, and the cheerful wood fire is altogether wanting. A few handfuls of straw, and fragments of dried

corn stalks, the remnants of a camel's supper, constitute the whole supply of fuel at the old Bedouin's command to-night, and with this he prepared his frugal meal. Gathering some heads of white millet in a field near at hand, he placed them for a few minutes among the blazing straw, then enfolding them one by one, in a corner of his coarse, woollen mantle, he beat them with a stone, and the grain thus detached, he ate without further preparation.

He has a little property in live stock: half-a-dozen ewes with lambs by their sides are picketed near his camp, their feet confined by means of light cords to pegs stuck in the earth, and four or five goats more trusted, are at large, and nibbling the scanty weeds around the spot.

Fuel is a very scarce commodity in Egypt. Charcoal is brought down the Nile in limited quantity, but is too dear for general use; we paid twenty-five piastres for a basketful, about a bushel and a-half, for our cook's galley fire. The fuel most commonly

in use is composed of horses' and cows' dung, mixed with straw, formed into cakes, and dried in the sun. Corn-stalks, canes, and even straw, are also largely used.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Walk on Foot to the Sakkara Pyramids—The Desert and the Pyramids—Dangers of an Ascent—Exhumed Relics of Mortality—The Egyptian Plough—Culture with the Hoe—Introduction of South Australian Corn—Once More in Cairo—An Illumination—Solemn merry-making—Festivities without Females—Ceremony of Doséh—The Slave Market—Turkish Slave Laws—Packing up for Alexandria.

FRIDAY, 1st December. Early this morning we set out on foot for the Pyramids. We had engaged donkeys, but they looked so poor, and the saddles so bad, that we preferred walking to sitting on their backs; the cool, bracing air of the morning, too, disposed us for exercise. The donkeys were led, following us, in case we should require them.

A pleasant walk of four miles along an elevated dyke, which crosses the rich plain, brought us to the border of the desert and the Pyramids. The smaller is a complete

ruin—a mere conical heap of disjointed stones; the larger is more perfect, but differs much in shape and construction from the Pyramids of Geezeh, being built not in a countless succession of narrow steps and gradually diminishing courses, but in five large stories, or portions, all nearly perpendicular in construction, but each contracted some twenty feet or more within the outer circumference of the story upon which it stands.

The Pyramids of Sakkara appear much more ancient than those of Geezeh. As I have already mentioned, the smaller has crumbled into ruin, and the other is fast going to decay; the stones, scaly and mouldering, have in many parts slipped from their places, and fallen down. By placing my feet in the wide, yawning joints of the masonry, I climbed the first portion, and gained the broad terrace above. I found this so encumbered with fallen stones and rubbish, as to afford but very insecure footing; and the unsafe condition of many of the

tottering masses overhead convincing me that any further ascent could not be attempted without danger, I yielded to the remonstrances of our guides, and came down again.

The melancholy spectacle of ancient graves and sepulchres, laboriously invaded, and unsparingly rifled, in the gratification of modern avarice and remorseless curiosity, is here even more conspicuous than at the great Pyramids. The whole surface of the gravelly desert around the Pyramids of Sakkara is absolutely whitened with rags of mummy-cloth and human bones, which, after a repose of so many ages, have been dragged from resting-places fifty or sixty feet beneath the surface. I saw one skull with a portion of the scalp and hair still attached, though the bleached appearance of the bone showed that, after its countless years of rest underground, it must have lain long exposed above.

In the face of the rocks towards the plain, is a fine vaulted tomb of three cham-

bers; it is excavated in the rock, but the walls are everywhere lined with thin slabs of fine white stone covered with hieroglyphics, the bright colours of which look as fresh as if the work of yesterday.

Quitting this tomb, we set out on our return. On the plain we saw many ploughs at work; they are drawn by a single pair of oxen, and are absurdly rough and simple in construction, having neither mould-board nor coulter, and only one short stilt; the share is a mere point like a broad spear head, and the long plough-beam rests upon, and is affixed to, the yolk; yet so soft and friable is the rich soil of the Nile, that with this rude implement the Egyptian ploughman contrives to make very creditable work.

Much land is broken up and cultivated with the hoe, particularly in the wetter parts about the borders of the ditches and canals; the instrument used has a very short handle, which occasions the husbandman to work in what would seem a painfully stooping attitude.

The men when at labour are nearly naked, the lower part of their persons only being clothed; they are mostly stout fellows, and appear to work with a will.

The young wheat is springing up vigorously upon the lands from which the waters have recently receded. It appears remarkable that wheat culture can be successfully pursued where the soil is of such a rich, unctuous quality. One would be inclined to suppose that abundance of straw with little grain would be the produce of such land; and this, we are told, was actually the result, when a few years ago, in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, the experiment was tried of using a sample of the famed South Australian wheat for seed.

The blue lupin is extensively grown; and the seeds, prepared by steeping and slightly malting, are much eaten by the poor. All the maize that we have seen growing in Egypt is of a very small and inferior description.

About two, P.M., we were glad after our prolonged ramble to regain the boat, in which we immediately embarked, and proceeded towards Cairo, which was in sight, and distant only twelve or fourteen miles. The sun was very warm; and, fagged with the morning's exercise, we found a swim round our vessel, as she floated gently down the stream, very refreshing.

At seven o'clock we reached Boulac; and after settling with our rais, whose misdeeds had been forgiven and forgotten, and giving a few piastres to be distributed among the crew, we set out for Shepherd's Hotel, and there speedily joined the rest of our party and friends.

Cairo is much illuminated and very noisy to-night, this being the last evening of the eight days' rejoicing to celebrate the return of the annual caravan of pilgrims to Mecca. The merry-making is, however, of a very grave and sober quality. It is true, that solemn Moslems are to be seen marvellously indulging in the excitements

of a swing, or dizzily spinning upon a whirligig; but their levity is amply compensated by the intense seriousness of the numerous groups which, assembled in large tents and booths, are groaningly performing the bowing dance of the dervishes. In some of the tents, men disguised in female attire, clumsily attempt an imitation of the movements of the dancing girls, and their performance appears to have its admirers.

Without exception, the merry-makers—spectators as well as actors—are all males, a circumstance which contributed to render the whole proceedings so insufferably dull and stupid to our perceptions, that, withdrawing early from the scene, we returned to our hotel.

Saturday, 2nd. We learn from our friends who remained in Cairo, that we missed an extraordinary spectacle by our absence yesterday, when, during the forenoon, the Grand Sheik of the *Saadeeh* performed the annual ceremony of the *Doséh*, by riding his horse over the prostrate

bodies of two or three hundreds of the faithful, who were packed together for the purpose, like herrings in a barrel, along a certain space allotted for the purpose. Several youngsters for whom room could not be found among these recumbent fanatics, actually shed tears of disappointment. The crowds of assembled spectators, we are told, were immense; and as the Pasha was present with all his staff, the scene was altogether very interesting. Though the Sheik is a heavy man, and his horse pranced much, unwilling to travel over such a quivering pavement, none of the votaries, it seems, were very seriously damaged.

The slave-market of Cairo, which we visited, though no longer flourishing as in by-gone days, still maintains a recognized existence. Half-a-dozen young Ethiopian girls only were offered for sale at the time of our visit. The poor little creatures wore a very sullen and joyless expression; their hair was tied into bunches at the

sides of their heads, and loaded with a quantity of rancid grease, laid on with an unsparing hand. One little girl, apparently about fourteen years old, whose rather pleasing features bore a striking resemblance to those of the Sphynx, finding herself noticed, imagined she was about to be bought, and her countenance brightened up wonderfully; when, however, we turned to leave, and she perceived she was still to remain in the dull thralldom of the dealer's custody, her poor little face speedily resumed its former melancholy.

British subjects, it appears, are prohibited under a penalty of £40 from purchasing slaves at Cairo, even though the object should be to restore them to liberty.

The Turkish slave laws stand in advantageous contrast with those of certain other slave-holding states at the opposite point of the compass. In Egypt, all Ethiopian slaves, male and female, desiring to change their owners may claim to be sold, and have only to proclaim publicly their wish in this

respect, when the owner becomes compelled to submit them to sale by auction; thus they have always the means of escape from a harsh or cruel master.

Again, all female black slaves are entitled to marry and receive their freedom after ten years' servitude, the owner being required to supply a small sum by way of portion, and when the slave is held in concubinage by the owner she becomes free at the expiration of three years, and her children are born free. Added to all this, the slaves of Egypt are generally treated with kindness, lightly tasked, and regarded as a part of the family of their owners.

For the above particulars I am indebted to a gentleman who has resided many years in Egypt, and having adopted the manners and language of the country, may be supposed well informed upon these subjects.

We proceed to-morrow by the Transit Administration's steamer to Alexandria, and were busily occupied all this afternoon packing and preparing.

CHAPTER XIX.

Departure from Cairo—The Barrage—The Banks of the Nile—Turkish Lady Passengers and their Guard—An Egyptian Railway—Arrival at Alexandria—Uninteresting Aspect of the City—A Turkish Bath—Gold-washing.

SUNDAY, 3rd. Bade adieu to Cairo at an early hour, and after a pleasant drive to Boulac, as the bright sun was breaking through the chilly mists of the morning, we quitted the wharf at eight o'clock, and were borne rapidly down the Nile by a fine iron steamboat, going thirteen miles an hour.

Soon after starting we passed a large herd of buffaloes crossing the broad stream: the creatures swam with noses and eyes only above the water, and being in such number made a very singular appearance. Some miles further on we came in sight of the *barrage*, a magnificent structure, con-

sisting of more than a hundred arches of brick, with stone quoins and facings, which crosses both the Rosetta and Dameitta branches of the river, a little below the point or apex of the Delta.

This stupendous work was begun by Mohammed Ali under the direction of French engineers with the object of damming and raising the waters of the Nile sufficiently to supply canals to be dug through the Delta, a large portion of the lands of which are profitless for want of the means of irrigation. It is also supposed that the barrage might be made available to raise the inundation of the river during seasons of deficient flood.

The works, which it is said have already cost two and a half millions, are now at a stand still, and it seems undecided whether they shall ever be completed. According to the original design the arches were to be fitted with sluices, by means of which it was proposed to hold back the mighty stream of the flooded Nile at pleasure; but grave apprehensions are now entertained

of the danger of attempting to check so vast a body of water by a dam which, however strong in itself, must be based and abutted upon alluvial soil. Great efforts and much skill have been employed to overcome this difficulty; the river's banks are cased with solid masonry for some distance both above and below the works, and besides extensive piling, an artificial bottom of concrete has been formed beneath the stream, it is said, for the space of a quarter of a mile.

In the meanwhile the barrage greatly obstructs the navigation of the river, and is not of much service as a bridge, being unavailable for the railway constructing between Cairo and Alexandria, and not in the direction of any other great line of traffic.

Openings spanned by draw-bridges are provided for the passage of vessels, and through one of these, after some delay and manœuvring, our steamer, paddling all the while against the stream, backed slowly down stern foremost. For sailing vessels

the difficulties in passing must be very great: I observed one boat lying wrecked against the piers.

Below the barrage on the left bank, the desert approaches quite to the river, the yellow sands advancing into the water. The traffic upon this part of the river is very extensive; cargo-boats of a larger description than those we met with up the river cover the stream. I counted as many as fifty in sight at one time. The mud villages standing upon the plain without shade or shelter have a bare and desolate aspect; the date groves which embellish the river's banks above Cairo not being found here.

One of the many ploughs which we saw everywhere in operation was worked by a most singular team, a buffalo and a camel drawing in the same yoke.

Among the passengers are some Turkish ladies who came from Constantinople in the train of the Sultan's daughter, lately wedded to Said Pasha, and who are now returning; they are engaged and screened from vulgar

eyes in a sort of deck-house prepared for contingencies of this sort. Two gaudily dressed black eunuchs keep such vigilant watch as to baffle all attempts of the curious to get a peep at the imprisoned beauties, who, it is said, are ladies of high rank.

At half-past two we reached the point to which the railway has been completed, eighty miles from Cairo, and here we quitted the boat and were transferred to the rail. The Turkish ladies were speedily bundled by their black attendants into a carriage and closed up, and the luggage having been landed and placed upon the trucks with a degree of despatch quite marvellous for Egypt, we were soon again on our way.

The railway carriages are roomy and exceedingly comfortable; it may be said, indeed, luxurious in their lining, stuffing, and internal arrangement, and the pace was not bad. We reached Mamoudieh, twenty-nine miles, in an hour and a half; and, after a short halt there to wood and water, performed the remaining forty miles in two

hours, arriving at the Alexandrian terminus about seven o'clock. Here we found conveyances in attendance, and entering the city without delay, we procured lodgings at Rey's Hôtel d'Europe.

A sharp north wind rendered the temperature quite cold to-day, and after we reached the hotel there was a heavy shower of rain, the first we have seen since quitting the neighbourhood of Ceylon.

Monday, 4th. After Cairo the appearance of Alexandria is uninteresting: the streets it is true are broader and cleaner, the bazaars and shops more spacious and less dark, and the principal square in which our hotel is situated is surrounded by large and handsome buildings; but the thoroughly oriental character which lends to Cairo its greatest charm is here wanting; black hats almost carry the day against the scarlet fez, and many of the most conspicuous buildings are quite in European style.

I have been annoyingly disabled yesterday and this morning with a stiff neck, the

result I fancy of my swimming in the cold waters of the Nile; but a Turkish bath this afternoon has nearly cured me. Stiff, indeed, must be the neck that would not be softened and suppld by the steamings, soapings, scrubbings, and shampooings of the Turkish bath; of the varied processes of which being resolved to make a full trial, I, on entering the building, surrendered myself unreservedly into the hands of the attendants to do with me as they would.

I was first conducted to a small carpeted apartment, where, speedily divested of my clothes, a large piece of light cotton cloth was wrapped about me, and I was at once led into a spacious marble chamber, lighted from the dome-shaped roof above. In the midst, a spouting fountain of boiling water emitting clouds of vapour filled the place with a hot misty atmosphere which at first produced a feeling of suffocation; this however soon wore off. Recesses placed at intervals round the circular walls contain the baths, and to one of these I was led by

my half-naked conductor, and seated upon the smooth white marble, which it was an agreeable surprise to find quite warm.

The effects of the moist heated atmosphere in which they dwell are obvious in the lean, wasted, and yellow appearance of the attendants, which, with the hollow sounds and reverberating echoes caused by the vaulted form of the chamber, combines to impart a singular and almost ghastly effect to the whole scene. Having again divested me of my covering, my attendant now deluged me with very hot water, which he drew from pipes supplying a hot and a cold stream into a wooden bowl, and dashed rapidly over me, without previously applying other test of the temperature than that afforded by his practised eye, and as he kept as near the scalding point as was bearable, this I confess seemed rather a disagreeably hazardous mode of proceeding. However, I came unscathed through this operation, and the next was to convert my whole person, head, face, and all, into one frothy mass of strong

lather, by means of an immense piece of soap and a large handful of soft white tow or some similar fibrous substance.

After this, I was left to soak for some time in the bath, and then, laid at length upon the marble, I was turned about, and elaborately scoured and rubbed down, the operator exultingly drawing my attention to the really startling quantities of the skin's surface which he succeeded in bringing away in large rolls from all parts of my person, particularly about the arms. The next operation was to crack all the joints, and stretch the limbs; after which I was wrapped in numerous cloths, reconducted to the room where I had undressed, and stowed away upon cushions to cool gradually. Here coffee was brought me, and a chibouk; and after remaining quiet about an hour, I dressed and went away, feeling in a higher state of polish than I had ever done in my life before, and, as I have already mentioned, cured of my rheumatic pains.

Walking during the afternoon by the

side of the bay, and observing two men standing in the water, and with large wooden bowls going through all the motions of gold washing, curiosity led me to approach them, when, to my surprise, I found that such was really the case; the men were washing the mud and sand which they shovelled up from beneath the water, and were actually procuring not only gold, but precious stones as well. The gold, however, instead of dust or *nuggets*, consisted of small time-worn fragments of hooks and links of chain; and the stones were ready cut. I saw one small ruby procured while I stood by, but the *diggings* appeared to be far from rich. As far as I could understand, some houses were once destroyed by the sea at this spot, but when, or in what manner, I leave it to those better acquainted with the incidents of Alexandrian history to explain.

CHAPTER XX.

Passengers from Southampton—Cleopatra's Needle and Pompey's Pillar—An Egyptian Funeral—Museum Library of the Bruchion—Attempt at English Farming—Intractable Egyptian Husbandmen—Male and Female Date Trees—Miseries of the Harem—Caprice and Cruelty of Abbas Pasha—Palace of the Pashas—Concession in Favour of Infidel Heels.

TUESDAY, 5th. The Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer arriving this morning from Southampton. The passengers, hungry and in haste, swarmed in upon us as we were sitting down to breakfast; and with an impetuosity which, under other circumstances, it would have been amusing to behold, cleared off the comestibles in such rapid style, that all disappeared—tea and coffee, butter and bread, fish, flesh, and fowl—while we, the quiet sojourners in the house, were vainly endeavouring to make our wants known to the distracted waiters.

The Marseilles steamer has also arrived with the mails, bringing accounts of the melancholy loss of a large number of transport ships at Balaklava, and other parts of the Black Sea. Intelligence of the disastrous, though brilliant victories of Balaklava and Inkermann, met us some days ago at Cairo; and now this fearful account of wrecks casts a deeper gloom over the expedition, which is assuredly becoming a very stern and serious affair.

The scrambling attempt to breakfast ended, we mounted donkeys, and sallied forth, the donkey-boys as usual running behind, shouting to their beasts, and at regular intervals treating them to a smart thwack, whether required or not, and often, indeed, in spite of the expressed wishes of the riders to be left to regulate the pace for themselves.

The sights of Alexandria are few, and soon disposed of. Cleopatra's Needle and Pompey's Pillar are, as all the world knows, the principal, and for these we set out.

The former, standing in a low situation near the water, is not a conspicuous object in the city; but the pillar, placed upon elevated ground outside the present walls, makes, from all directions, a very striking appearance.

The shaft of this splendid granite column is in a wonderful state of preservation, retaining even the fine polish upon a great part of its surface; but the capital, which is of some softer material, is much disintegrated; and the masonry which supports the massy pedestal is in such a dilapidated condition, that the whole monument seems in danger of coming down, if means be not taken to repair the ravages of time.

At the foot of the hillock upon which the pillar stands is an extensive cemetery, into which we saw two long funeral processions pass. But few women were among the mourners; and these, completely veiled, sitting upon the ground while the funeral ceremonies were in progress, uttered at

regular intervals a loud cry, precisely resembling an Australian *cooey*. About a score of men meanwhile stood round the brink of the open grave, and energetically bowing their turbaned heads marked time in a manner more rapid than solemn to the strains of the chanted dirge. At noon we were driven home by heavy showers.

Wednesday, 6th. Not far from the obelisks, some extensive and very massive substructions of brickwork, which are being excavated to supply material for fresh erections, are said to be the ruins of the famous Museum Library of the Bruchion; and certainly, some charred fragments which we picked from among the rubbish brought to the surface, would appear to be the result of the combustion of masses of paper, papyrus, or some similar flakey substance.

It seems wonderful that, after the lapse of so many ages, the strength and solidity of the ancient brickwork should be so great—the mortar appearing even harder

than the bricks—that the mass broken up like stone from a quarry, and shaped into large blocks, is used in the construction of new edifices. A very handsome Greek church, which is building near the spot, has drawn largely for its materials upon the Library ruins.

This afternoon we visited the house and grounds of Mr. L——, a gentleman with whom we became acquainted at Cairo. He held an important employment under the late Abbas Pasha; and though an Englishman, has, by means of his children born in Egypt, been enabled to become the possessor of Egyptian soil. His estate, comprising about a hundred acres, is finely situated upon the bank of the Mamoudieh Canal, near the wide waters of the lake Mareotis.

Mr. L—— has built himself a house, and laid out a spacious garden in a mixed oriental and European style; and has made the attempt, but, as he told us, with very indifferent success, to cultivate his farm in

English mode, his intractable Egyptian husbandmen having obstinately resisted all his attempts to substitute the English plough for the rude implement, which in this part of the world is made to serve the purposes of one.

In the garden we were shown some date-palms, which, though planted only in 1848, are already some twenty feet high, and bearing fruit, thus proving that the extremely slow growth generally attributed to this tree must be regarded as one of the many popular errors which yet attach to eastern matters. The date-palm, moreover, it appears, far from delighting in arid sands and drought, grows most rapidly and thrives best in the rich, fat lands of the Nile, where it stands during a portion of every year with its roots under water. I must not forget to mention, however, that there are many varieties of date trees; and that these remarks probably only apply to such as are cultivated in Lower Egypt, the fruit of which, though large, is of inferior sweetness and flavour.

The trees are propagated by means of suckers, and must not be planted singly, but in groups, as there are male and female trees, and even when thus growing together, care and attention are required to ensure a good crop of fruit. The blossoms of the female tree must be impregnated by securing in the midst of the bunch a portion of the male flower branch, taken fresh from a neighbouring tree. The young plants also require attention; suckers must be frequently cleared off, and the lower leaves closely cut away to form and shape the stem, otherwise the plant, instead of taking the form of a tree, spreads out a wilderness of shoots and suckers.

From Mrs. L——, a very intelligent and most delightful person, whose proficiency in Arabic, and whose thorough acquaintance with oriental manners and customs, as well as her husband's position in the Government of the late Pasha, have given her numerous opportunities to visit the vice-regal hareem, as well as those of most

of the grandees of Egypt, we heard many interesting particulars of the recluse existence of Moslem wives; and certainly her anecdotes are not calculated to diminish the wish and the hope that the more extended intercourse, and, above all, the closer relations into which the east and the west must be drawn by the progress and results of the present war, may do much to procure for the oppressed and degraded womankind of Egypt some measure of the freedom and rational position enjoyed by their western sisters, and which they now begin more generally to understand and to envy.

The inmates of a hareem confined to the limited society within its walls, and that society, as a natural result of the relationship towards each other of its different members, torn and distracted by feelings of jealousy, distrust, and mutual dislike, must, according to the descriptions of our informant, generally constitute a very unhappy little community. Even while in favour, the

joys of the chosen one are marred by doubts of the continuance of this preference; and when, the transient passion over, she is thrown back among unpitied rivals to bear the taunts of gratified envy, in addition to her own regrets, her misery is complete, her dream of life is then over, and she must resign herself, without further hope, to drag through the remainder of her days in the dreary monotony of the hareem's luxurious thralldom, and, with a crushed heart, strive to school her wounded spirit to submission, while she sees the place that once was her's usurped and occupied by others.

Such, we are assured, is life in the hareem, under its most favourable aspect; but all these miseries may be aggravated by horrors of the most revolting kind, to gratify the savage caprices and passions of a tyrant master. The late Viceroy, Abbas Pasha, it is said, was in the treatment of the women of his hareem capricious and cruel, to a reproach even in Egypt. Those who were

so unfortunate as to fall under his displeasure, he not unfrequently caused to be put to death; and on one occasion, the wretch himself acting as executioner, with hideous ingenuity destroyed his helpless victim, by sewing up the mouth and nostrils.

Just, indeed, was the retribution that at length brought this monster into the murderer's power. During an expedition up the Nile, he was destroyed by his own attendants, and little effort, it is said, was made to discover the perpetrators of the deed, who were regarded as deliverers, rather than assassins.

Thursday, 7th. The handsome palace of the Pashas, built by Mahommed Ali, upon the Pharos Island, and commanding a fine view over the harbour and shipping, gave us occupation for this morning, going through its magnificent apartments. The floors are all beautifully inlaid with woods of various colours, formed into elaborate patterns, enriched with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and highly polished. Before quitting

the marble corridor, the attendant, who was as usual barefooted, examined our heels to satisfy himself that there were no prominent nails, but did not require us to leave our boots; on the contrary, when I was proceeding to take off mine before entering one saloon, the exquisite floor of which I was really fearful of injuring, the man hurried up, and earnestly begged me to desist, giving me to understand, as far as I could comprehend him, for he spoke a mixture of French and Arabic, that it was against the will and wishes of the Pasha, that English or Frenchmen should be subjected even to this trifling inconvenience when visiting the palace.

These feelings of regard for the Allies of the Sultan, and of lively interest in the events of the war, seem to be largely shared by all classes, even to the lowest, both here and at Cairo; but there appears to be among the common people, an unbounded belief in the strength and resources of Russia, and a somewhat amusing misapprehension of the

position of the Allies in the contest. Our dragoman, the other day at Cairo, acting as the mouth-piece of a knot of eager questioners, showed equal surprise and incredulity, when we assured him that the French and British forces before Sebastopol are not in the Sultan's pay.

The results of the concession in favour of infidel heels are conspicuous in the defaced and damaged condition of the floor of the spacious dining-room of the palace, where, upon his recent accession to the vice-regal power, Said Pasha for several successive days exercised the most unbounded hospitality, all and sundry of the hungry being free to come and partake of the constantly replenished supply of good cheer under which the tables groaned from morning till night.

As we were leaving the palace, we met in the garden, which leads towards the hareem opposite, no less important a functionary than the chief eunuch, and an important personage in his own estimation, at

least, he indeed appeared to be. Showily dressed, and attended by slaves, but wearing a most villanous expression in his hideous black countenance, with the air of a lord he stalked past, putting in a haughty tone some question to our dragoman as to the object of our visit.

CHAPTER XXI.

Arrangements for Reaching Constantinople—The Catacombs—Wounded from the Crimea—Loads borne by Women—Egyptian Meat—Striking Effect of Artificial Hatching—A Parting with a Dragoman—Departure for Alexandria—Afloat on the Mediterranean.

FRIDAY, 8th. So cold a north wind is blowing, that it is difficult to keep warm walking in a great coat. My friends proceeded to-day by the Tagus steam-ship to Malta, and I only remain to pursue my wanderings from this point alone. It had been my intention to make an excursion into Syria and Palestine, and to this end I had engaged as dragoman a Syrian, who had been in the service of others of our party since our first arrival at Cairo, but unpleasant accounts of fever and sickness in those countries have served to deter me; added to this, all accounts from Sebastopol concur in representing that a general assault is likely

to be soon attempted, and as I am most desirous to reach the Crimea in time to witness that event, or, at least, before the contest shall be brought to a termination, I have resolved to push on without delay, and have taken a passage by one of the steamers of the Australian Lloyd's expected from Bengal, and which is to leave for Constantinople on Monday or Tuesday next.

Alexandria, like Cairo, is a miserably dull place for a stranger after the day has closed; here is, however, a creditably got up Italian Opera, and there I beguiled my time this evening. The house is small, but was well filled, and the singing and music were by no means bad; the performers are, I believe, chiefly amateurs.

Saturday, 9th. A visit to the ancient Catacombs, about three miles outside the city, by the sea-shore, helped me through the day. The excavations are very extensive, but empty, all they contained of interest having been long since carried away.

Much sympathy is excited by the arrival

from Constantinople of a steamer, bringing among her passengers a number of the wounded heroes of the Crimea, who have taken this somewhat circuitous route to England. One of the party, a lieutenant in the gallant "Greys," has taken up his quarters in the Hôtel d'Europe, and the very agreeable evening that I have spent in converse with him, has further stimulated my impatience to behold the wonders of the camps and trenches.

Sunday, 10th. There is no day of quiet all the week in these eastern cities, although there are three distinct sabbaths. The Mussulmans close their bazaars and shops on Fridays, the Jews on Saturdays, and the Christians on Sundays; but as the shops of the former two are then open, there is nothing to distinguish Sunday from another day, except that here church bells are heard—with an effect very remarkable to a stranger—above the clamour and din of business. Here are in Alexandria a Protestant and a Roman Catholic church, both

of which are allowed full privileges, even to the ringing of their bells as noisily as they please.

The burthens which the women here carry upon their heads are really surprising: the carcasses of two sheep in a huge wooden bowl, form an ordinary load to be borne in this way; and I have occasionally seen the carcass of an ox carried by two women in the same manner, two quarters in each bowl. It is true the oxen slaughtered here are very small and lean, but the weight must certainly be over three hundred pounds.

The meat of Egypt is very lean and bad; the rank flavour of the mutton we occasionally found so disgusting as to produce feelings of absolute nausea, and the eggs and chickens are very small and indifferent. At the present day, assuredly none are likely to feel longings after the "flesh-pots of Egypt."

A striking instance of the effects of artificial custom in changing or eradicating

natural instincts and habits, is afforded by the domestic fowls of Egypt, which are propagated by means of the egg ovens: hens, we were told, hatched by this mode, exhibit no disposition to sit upon their own eggs.

Monday, 11th. The Austrian steamer by which I am to proceed has come in, and will depart early to-morrow. I was therefore pretty well occupied to-day purchasing in the bazaar some blankets and various other articles, as biscuits, tea, sugar, brandy, a spirit-lamp, and tin pots to boil water, &c., which I am told should be provided here, as at Constantinople all articles of common necessity have risen to prices that seem fabulous, or are unobtainable at any price.

From the officers arrived from the seat of war I also learn that a servant would be a great encumbrance and impediment in going forward to the Crimea. I have therefore imparted to my dragoman that I must leave him behind. The poor

fellow, though visibly much disappointed, made no complaint, only saying it was for me to decide according to my pleasure; and the small present I felt bound to make him, as I had taken Elias Abbas into my service with the understanding that his engagement was to be of some duration, and had found him always most zealous and attentive, drew from him the warmest expressions of gratitude.

Tuesday, 12th. Got on board the Italia steamer at eight o'clock, and turning my back without much regret upon Alexandria, we were soon after steaming out of the bay.

Poor Elias, who although paid and discharged last night, continued most assiduous in his attendance, and would not hear of my coming off to the ship without his assistance, remained till the last moment, and then kissing my hands he took leave. I observed the good-hearted fellow's eyes fill as he descended the ship's side; and I must confess, that solitary among strangers as I now felt myself, it was not without

some feeling of concern that I saw depart this last and only familiar face.

A cool fresh breeze ruffled the waters, and the sun shone brightly in a cloudless sky, as passing the Pharos Tower we stood away to the north north west; the low shores of Aboukir's famous bay showing indistinctly in the distance to our right. Quickly the level coast of Egypt faded from view, the tall monuments, towers, and minarets of Alexandria soon afterwards sank below the wave; and now fairly afloat upon the classic waters of the Mediterranean, and, turning a fresh page in my book of life, I take the opportunity to close this first book of my Diary.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:

F. Shoberl, Printer, 51, Rupert Street, Haymarket.





